

Richd. H. Lee, June 1, 1841
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Brick. H. Lee, June 1, 1841
(1782.)
A
COMPLETE AND ACCURATE
A C C O U N T
OF THE
Very Important Debate

IN THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS,

On TUESDAY, JULY 9, 1782.

IN WHICH

**The Cause of Mr. Fox's Resignation, and the great
Question of AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE came
under Consideration :**

Including the several SPEECHES and REPLIES of

**The Right Hon. Mr. Fox,
The Right Hon. Isaac Barré,
Lord John Cavendish,
General Conway,
Mr. Burke,
Sir William Wake,
Mr. Coke,
Mr. Frederick Montague,
The Hon. Mr. Townshend,**

**Mr. Martin,
Lord Althorpe,
Mr. Grenville,
Mr. Aubrey,
The Hon. William Pitt,
Mr. Lee, late Solicitor-General,
Mr. Gascoyne, sen.
Commodore Johnstone, and
Sir Edward Deering.**

To which are added,

**The Speeches of the Duke of Richmond and of Lord Shelburne,
in the House of Lords, the following Day, on the same Sub-
ject: With what was thrown out in Reply by Mr. Burke,
Lord John Cavendish, and Mr. Fox, afterwards, in the
House of Commons.**

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T O T H E

Right Honourable Mr. F O X.

S I R,

NO one can possibly suspect, that to pay you a single compliment can make up any part of the design of laying this publication before you. The panegyric that usually runs through a dedication will, on this occasion, be left wholly unattempted. It is impossible to give you any praise that can have either novelty or variation to recommend it. Your whole life has been one continued series of great and splendid actions, and the beauties of language have long been gathered by abler hands, to deck them out for the applause and imitation of the world.

The debate, reported in the following sheets, explaining the cause of your late resignation, has been thought of too important a nature to be trusted to the public prints of the day. The extreme eagerness shewn to hear it, and the various facts it has brought to light, render it highly deserving, not only of a general reading, but of the attention of ages yet to come; when men, unheated by the prejudices of the times, shall look back, and review your character with wonder and admiration. To effect this, is all that is here meant; and, if it can be thought attempted with any degree of success, the end proposed is fully answered.

That you may long live the greatest character of the age that loves and reveres you, possessed, as you are, of the best head and heart that ever ornamented human nature, is, in common with that of the whole country, the sincere and constant prayer of,

S I R,

Your most obedient,

most devoted and very humble servant,

July 12, 1782.

Ed. Ed. Ed.

This image shows a blank, aged, cream-colored page, likely an endpaper or flyleaf of a book. The paper has a slightly textured appearance with some faint smudges and discoloration, characteristic of old paper. The right edge of the page shows the binding structure, including the spine and the edges of other pages. There is no text or other markings on the page.

This image shows a blank, aged, cream-colored page, likely an endpaper or flyleaf of a book. The paper has a slightly textured appearance with some faint smudges and discoloration, characteristic of old paper. The right edge of the page is bound into a dark, possibly black, cover. There is no text or other markings on the page.

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THE following debate is universally allowed to be the most important one that ever happened in the House of Commons. Great care has therefore been taken to give it to the world in the most correct and impartial manner; not from the daily newspapers, but from the memory of several gentlemen who attended the House for that particular purpose.

The Speeches of Mr. Burke, Mr. W. Pitt, and Mr. Lee, especially, which, though severally delivered at a very late hour, made a deep impression on the whole House, are no where to be found but in this publication.

What happened in both Houses of Parliament on the two subsequent days relating to the same topics, by the respective parties concerned, is added, to make the whole complete.

The system, on which the new Minister is to act, is here not only clearly and explicitly unfolded, but much light is also thrown on the present state of parties among us. We are in some measure enabled to trace their secret connections, to discriminate their principles, and to ascertain their relative merit and influence. In short, this most interesting debate, from the vast curiosity it excited in the public, and the great variety of national objects it involved, bids fair to form no inconsiderable epoch in the political annals of this country.

A FULL AND IMPARTIAL
A C C O U N T
OF THE VERY IMPORTANT
D E B A T E
IN THE
HOUSE of COMMONS,

O N

Tuesday, the 9th of July, 1782,

On the following Motion,

Made by DANIEL PARKER COKE, Esq.
Member for NOTTINGHAM.

“ That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, to
“ request his Majesty to inform this House, which
“ of his Majesty’s Ministers had *dared* to recom-
“ mend to his Majesty, to grant to the Right Hon.
“ Isaac Barré a Pension of three Thousand and two
“ Hundred Pounds a Year.”

MR. Coke said, that he had heard a report, which had Mr. Coke,
very much surprized him, and he wished to learn whe-
ther there were any grounds for it in truth; he had heard that
a pension had been granted to the present Treasurer of the Navy
(Colonel Barré) of 3,200l. a year; that the patent was now
hurrying through the different offices, that, no doubt, it might
pass the Great Seal before the royal assent should have been
given to the bill for reforming his Majesty’s civil establishment:

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this pension, he understood, was not to take place, as long as the right honourable member, who was to enjoy it, should continue to fill his present or any other office. There was no man in that House more conscious than he was of the merits of that right honourable gentleman, and no one would go farther in rewarding them; but still he could not think that this was a time for bestowing such considerable rewards: the common language of men was, that the resources of the nation were exhausted; and the most rigorous and scrupulous plans of œconomy should be adopted; but this pension was not an instance of that œconomy; and he could not conceal his surprise at finding the language and the practice of some men so much at variance: it was his intention to make a motion on the subject; but, before he should make it, he wished to be informed, whether such a pension had been granted or not.

Mr. F.
Montague.

Mr. *F. Montague* acknowledged that the honourable member was pretty correct in what he had stated relative to the pension; a warrant had certainly passed the Treasury board for a pension of 3,200*l.* to the gentleman alluded to; and he himself, as a commissioner of the Treasury-board, had signed it.

Mr. Coke,

Mr. *Coke*, having had the fact thus ascertained, observed, that, having brought this business thus to light, it remained with him to do what he conceived to be his duty on such an occasion. There was a clause, he said, in that bill, for reforming the civil list, which lay ready for the royal assent, by which the minister of the day was to be restrained from granting a greater pension than six hundred pounds a year: now, if this clause was necessary in the present situation of affairs, he conceived it to be improper in ministers to grant the pension in question, and highly indecent in hurrying it through the different offices that it might pass the seal before the bill should pass into a law. He repeated again, that no man had a higher sense of the merits of the right honourable member who was to receive the pension than he had; and that no one would go farther to reward them, if the country was able to bear it; but, situated as the country was, he must oppose it at the present. He was returning to his constituents; and he should no doubt be asked, if the new ministers kept their word with the public, and were careful husbands of the public money: what must be his answer, if such a pension as this should pass the seal? Now was the time to interpose. In order, therefore, to prevent an additional burden from being laid upon the people, he thought it

it best to move the resolution he had stated; and begged leave to move it accordingly.

Mr. *Martin* seconded the motion; but said nothing more Mr. Martin.
than that he seconded it.

Mr. *F. Montague* took to himself a share in the blame (if any Mr. F.
Montague.
there was) of the measure which the motion censured, because he was one of those who signed the treasury-warrant for the pension: but he was much inclined to think that there was no blame at all in the measure; and he hoped the House would think so too, when he should have informed them that the warrant had been signed also by that great and respectable personage whose memory would ever be held in veneration, and whose loss the whole nation must long deplore; it was unnecessary for him to say he meant the noble marquis who had lately presided at the treasury-board: such was his opinion of the integrity of heart and firmness of mind of that noble lord to resist every thing that ought to be resisted, that his concurrence or approbation was sufficient to sanctify, in his mind, almost any act. There was then sitting by his side a noble lord, (Althorpe,) of whom, if he was not present, he would draw a picture that to those who did not know him might appear flattering, but, to those who were acquainted with him, fair, just, and impartial: that noble lord, who promised to tread in the footsteps of the noble marquis, and to be one day as amiable in the eyes of his country,—that noble lord had also signed the warrant. To two such names could he have made any difficulty to add his own? But, if his name stood alone, he should hold himself justified in having signed, when he considered the merits of the gentleman who was to receive this pension: he had for twenty years faithfully served the public in parliament, and watched over the actions of ministers with an attention and diligence that deserved the greatest applause; he had, in consequence of his political conduct, lost situations, which, if he had been less disinterested, would have rendered it unnecessary to grant him this pension; his disinterestedness ought not to go unrewarded, and it would be a reproach to the public if he should, in the latter part of his life, be exposed to inconvenience. He had, himself, been but a short time in office, and he was going shortly to retire from it: so far, however, was he from reproaching himself with any misconduct while he was in it for having granted this pension, that all he lamented was that he had not also signed a warrant for such another pension, in favour of a most respectable gentleman, (Mr. Burke,) whose services to the

public deserved to be amply rewarded. — He concluded with moving, that the debate on the motion then before the House should be adjourned.

Lord
Althorpe.

Lord *Althorpe* rose also to pay his tribute to the memory of the late noble marquis, whose loss, he said, the country could not sufficiently deplore. — The hon. member, to whom the pension in question was granted, had well-founded claims to public reward; his services were singular, and upon them he would rest his defence against any charge that should be brought against him for having concurred, as a lord of the treasury, in signing the warrant.

Mr.
Grenville.

Mr. *Grenville* (another lord of the treasury) had confessed that he also had concurred in the measure alluded to; but rested satisfied that the character of the right hon. member, who was the object of the present motion, would be the best justification he could urge.

Col. Barré.

Col. *Barré* begged the House would indulge him with their attention for a short time, while he should say a few words on a subject which so very nearly concerned him. He said he did not blame the hon. member who had brought forward the business; he had done no more than his duty; and most probably he himself, *mutatis mutandis*, should have acted precisely the same part. But he would not allow the hon. member to assume to himself any merit for having *brought to light* a transaction which from the beginning had never been kept a secret: it was known every where; he could not see any reason that could justify the hon. member in saying that it was now hurried through the offices, as the pension had been granted almost from the very day when the new administration came into office. Having said thus much, he requested he might be permitted to say a few words more immediately respecting himself, a subject which he certainly would not introduce if he did not feel it in some degree necessary. It did not become him to state claims or to enlarge upon pretensions that his friends might think he had to public favour; he would therefore only state what he had been, and what he might now have been, if his conduct had been different from what the House had seen it. In the last war he had the honour to command a regiment of one thousand men; and he trusted that, while he enjoyed that command, he had disgraced neither himself nor his profession. At the peace his regiment was broke; and, as he had served a campaign as adjutant-general to the immortal Wolfe, he was appointed to that office at home; he was at the
same

same time made governor of Stirling-castle; both which places were worth to him 1500l. net money. It was true that he ought not to look upon the tenure of these places as a tenure for life: however, they were military places, and he had a right to have imagined that he should have been dismissed from them for a military offence only: in this, however, he had mistaken: he was an enemy to *general warrants*; he had voted against them as a member of *parliament*; and the very next day he was dismissed from his *military* employments for this *political* offence. It was the etiquette to give a regiment to the adjutant general, in order to give him the more consequence and weight. He did not know whether he should have got a regiment of dragoons or of infantry, (for there would, no doubt, have been a difference in the income;) but he knew that his successor in the adjutant-generalship had cleared 4000guineas a year. This income he should have enjoyed, had he been less a friend to the liberties of the people; and at this day he would have been an old lieutenant-general. The loss of his adjutancy and government was not however enough. He had the half-pay of a lieutenant-colonel; about 166l. a year; a junior officer was promoted over his head; he had remonstrated and sued for his rank; but he was too obnoxious to the men in power; and, as it had been foreseen, he gave up his half-pay. Honour, he said, has its delicacies, and he had rather starve than sacrifice his feelings. Thus he had lost his very profession, and in return he was to enjoy, whenever he should quit his present office, a pension not more than equal to the half-pay annexed to the rank which he should now fill in the army if he had not given up his profession. The pension appeared to be high: 3200l. sounded big; but, in fact, after the deduction of taxes, fees, &c. the real amount to him would be little more than 2100l. If this appeared to the House to be too much, let them say so, and curtail it; or, if they disliked the whole, let them annihilate it, for he would not wish to put into his pocket a single shilling of the public money which that House should think he ought not to receive.

Mr. Aubrey.

Mr. Aubrey was of opinion, that, in such times as the present, the public should deal out rewards with a sparing hand; but still he thought that the hard treatment, which the right honourable member who had spoken last had experienced for his defence of the liberties of the people, had remained too long unrewarded; and he held it to be an act of justice on the part of the public to provide for a man who had suffered in their cause.

Mr.

Mr. Gascoyne, sen.

Mr. *Gascoyne* sen. approved very much of the motion against the pension : for, though he knew and revered the abilities of the right honourable member to whom it was granted, and acknowledged his deserts, still he must condemn the grant as a profusion of the public money by those very men, who, since they had been in office, had done nothing but paint the country as totally exhausted and unable to support the necessary establishments for war. They had condemned the late ministers for having spent the last days of their administration in granting pensions to persons *who had been many years in the service of the public* ; but, scarcely had their accusers got into their offices, when they began to give away the public money to their friends, who had but then *just got* into employment : — The people at large would know how to form a proper judgement of this conduct. — He himself had for twenty years served the public, and had not got a pension ; others had not served it as many weeks, and were to be amply provided for. He disapproved of the pensions granted both by the old and new ministers ; he did not like to see judges receive favours from the crown, for that was the way to make them dependent upon it ; and, having said that, he must condemn those, who, at the same time they were arraigning their predecessors for prodigality, and declaring that the finances of the country were completely distracted, were heaping new burdens upon the unfortunate people. The new ministers, however, appeared better qualified for finding fault than avoiding the commission of faults. The late cabinet was condemned for not having sent out Sir George Rodney with Admiral Kempenfelt, in order that the French convoy might have been wholly intercepted ; and yet, the very same men, who censured the late ministry for not having sent out a stronger force, had suffered the valuable convoys for New York, Quebec, and Newfoundland, to sail almost without a convoy, when the combined fleets were known to be at sea. It was a constant topic with them also, that the late ministers were divided among themselves, and perfect strangers to unanimity ; — but what was the unanimity that prevailed in the new cabinet ? — it was a non-entity : for, though there was not the least attempt made by the old ministers to divide the new cabinet or thwart their operations, still they were much greater strangers to unanimity than their predecessors had ever been ; and their discord was the more culpable at present, as it was now the more dangerous, when the enemy were at our door, when the combined

combined fleets were perhaps upon our coast. If Lord Howe should fall in with them, and any disaster should befall him, what must be the situation of the country, with a shattered fleet and divided counsels? — He trembled to look to the consequence! — As to the motion before the House, it should certainly have his concurrence; and he looked upon it as the more necessary from having heard an honourable member say, he was sorry he had not had an opportunity to sign a warrant for a pension also to another gentleman: the gentleman alluded to had unquestionably very great merit; but, if pecuniary rewards were to be bestowed upon every man of merit, he believed the most able financier in the kingdom would be found unable to find funds for such rewards.

Mr. *Martin* here rose a second time, and said, that, when he seconded the motion against the pension, it was not from any personalty or dislike to the honourable member who was the object of it; he knew his merits, and prized them highly; but he must condemn an expenditure of public money which, in his apprehension, militated against the general œconomy, which he understood was to have been established by the new ministry. Mr. Martin

Mr. *Fox* said, it would hardly be supposed that he rose for the purpose of opposing the pension, because at the time it had been granted, he was a Member of Administration, and had given it his approbation. Mr. Fox

He had not, he said, signed the warrant for the pension in question; but then it was not in his department to do so; for he confessed that he knew of it from the beginning; and, as one of the Cabinet Council, he had advised his Majesty to grant it.

No man was more happy than he was to subscribe to the high opinion the right honourable Gentleman's friends had of his integrity and abilities. He was very sure no one was less to be suspected, than he was, of lucrative motives. He was an able and a most disinterested servant of the Public, and one more sincere and steady, in his private friendship and personal attachment, in all his experience he never knew; and if in a little time scenes were unfortunately to follow, in which he and the right honourable Gentleman were to be at enmity with each other, it would not, he trusted, be misunderstood, and taken for any disrespect for him as a man and a gentleman. Yet while he admitted, and took a pleasure in admitting this, he had too much caution in him to agree with a noble Lord
on

on the treasury bench, that the right honourable Gentleman's merits stood singular. He had the highest opinion of them, but that opinion did not permit him to think they were in any respect of a singular nature. Others had their merits, and possessed them, perhaps, in as eminent a degree. The right honourable Gentleman's reduced salary had been mentioned, but there was another honourable Gentleman who had at least as much distinguished himself in that way; an honourable Gentleman, (Mr. Burke,) who had not only retrenched the expences of his own office, but who had also brought in a bill of Reform, that had passed that House, and had made a considerable progress in the Lords. This bill, he said, had the more particularly occurred to him as very proper to be mentioned, because the House would readily recollect, that the right honourable Gentleman and his friends had not given it their aid or assistance.

The honourable Gentleman took notice of the charge made against the late minister for granting the pension, particularly of the honourable Gentleman (Mr. Gascoyne) throwing out, that the late Administration had given pensions to those *out of office*, as their predecessors had been accused of giving pensions to those *in office*. This he reprobated in the severest terms, and said, that if the late Minister had given any pension, it had been to those not very generally suspected of being his friends, or standing up for those constitutional principles, in which he was well known to be rooted; and the right honourable Gentleman had been very right in saying, that he had never been on very intimate terms with the late noble Marquis. Others had certainly been better known to him; but how had his late and much respected dear and noble friend acted? Had his attention been wholly taken up in bestowing rewards, and considering the services of his *friends*? Or had he not been more solicitous to properly notice the merits of those, who had no very great right to so desirable a name? If the late Minister had granted pensions, they had been given to the friends of the present Minister, and to the advocates of a different system of politics than that the noble Marquis prided himself in. There were those who had a more intimate acquaintance with the noble Marquis than the right honourable Gentleman laid claim to, and who had as great pretensions to public favour, that the Marquis had not thought of. To distinguish his friends, and reward them with pensions, was not the purpose for which the noble Marquis came into power. He was
of

of too disinterested a nature, and lest the public should think he only meant to serve his friends; he even neglected those who were for ever dear to him; and with whom he had, for a series of years, been connected in the closest ties of friendship and society. It was a part of his character that he was most ready to provide for those, with whom he was the least connected, and who, perhaps, were the most hostile to his own principles: if he had been of a different turn of mind, he would not have forgotten one, whose merits gave him at least as high a claim to public reward.

[Mr. Burke, who sat immediately behind Mr. Fox, seemed much affected at this, and shed many tears.]

The noble Marquis was willing to convince the world, that it was not to serve his friends that he came into power; and, though the honourable Gentleman would not oppose the pension in question, yet he nevertheless thought it might as well have been left alone; but the generosity of the Marquis was such as would never suffer him to permit any merit to go unrewarded that he could take notice of. The honourable Gentleman spoke of the loss of the Marquis of Rockingham in a manner that very nearly touched the feelings of the House: He was, he said, a dear and valuable friend to him, and the man to whom the public were taught to look up for the salvation of the British empire; for he was a minister, who, of all other ministers, acted, throughout his life, on the purest and most constitutional principles.

An honourable Gentleman, Mr. Fox said, had observed, that the late Opposition had been continually in the habit of accusing Administration of being divided, and that the present one were themselves much more so. In answer to this he would only observe, that, as far as the charge respected himself, he never did arraign the late Administration merely because they were divided; but because that they would obstinately continue in power, and acting together, after they were divided, and when they knew how very opposite their political opinions were to one another. This the honourable Gentleman had thought highly censurable and impolitic, and as such had frequently arraigned it. But had this been the case with the Administration of which he had lately been a Member? He had joined the Members of it under an idea that he could act with them, and so long as he could act with them he had continued in office; but, the moment he discovered they meant to pursue those measures he could not approve of, he

had resigned, and in this he thought *he had acted like an honest man*. While he thought the Ministry were acting properly, he was happy to be one of them; and, the moment he thought he had reason to think otherwise, he judged it better to quit them than to remain with them, and thereby divide them, or give any opposition to their measures.

The Marquis of Rockingham, he added, was now no more; his principles no longer guided the cabinet! and those, who adhered to his principles, could no longer sit in the cabinet, since he, who had been the corner-stone of the Administration, was removed: with him his principles had been removed from the cabinet; and he should not be surprised if he should, in a short time, see the old ministers restored to their former favourite bench in that House: for, when he had reason to think their principles would soon be revived in the councils of his Majesty, there could be little ground of surprise if, with their principles, they should re-enter the cabinet: nor ought it to be matter of surprise that he should have resigned his situation, when he saw a very great probability that those principles, which had been the very foundation of the Administration in which he had borne a part, would be given up. When he, among others, had arraigned ministers for their discord in the cabinet, it was not merely because they disagreed, but because, disagreeing, they had what he should call the meanness to continue in office, and to give their countenance to measures which in their hearts they condemned. He differed in opinion from his late colleagues in office; that was no crime in him; but if, after he had disagreed in great and important points, he had continued to act with them, he should have held himself deserving of every censure due to that species of conduct which he had condemned in his predecessors.

General
Conway.

General Conway said, that the motion before the House had taken him by surprise; for, so far from knowing that such a question would be agitated, he did not know that any pension had been granted to the right honourable Gentleman. Now, that he did know of it, he was happy in an opportunity of bearing testimony to the many eminent qualities that the right honourable Gentleman possessed: and, as to his military services, and the hardship complained of in being dismissed from the post of Adjutant-general, he had been perfectly right in every particular he had stated regarding it.

The

The honourable Gentleman, having expressed his opinion upon this matter, thought it incumbent on him to touch upon another affair of more importance; and which respected the resignation of a certain right honourable Gentleman lately high in office. He lamented that fatal difference of opinion, which had deprived his Majesty of the benefit of the splendid talents and extraordinary abilities of his honourable friend; but he really could not see that there was such a disagreement in the cabinet as could justify his honourable friend in withdrawing from it. — When eleven Cabinet Ministers were assembled in Council, it was impossible that there should not be some shades of difference in opinion; but, when this difference was not of an important nature, to retire from the cabinet was a measure, in his mind, not to be justified. For his part, he had not perceived any departure whatever from those principles, which had been the basis of this Administration; an Administration, which he believed to have been the most popular that had ever been formed in this or any other country: if he had perceived any such departure, he not only would applaud his honourable friend for having withdrawn himself, but would accompany him in his retreat. He thought this a matter of the highest consequence to the public, and that that they ought to be informed of every particular respecting it. For his part he did not care how much the world were acquainted with it. He would be as explicit as the nature of the business would admit of. As to the reason of his continuing in office, it was entirely in consequence of the same system of measures being continued as that when he and the honourable Secretary (Mr. Fox) went into office was laid down. He knew of no difference. He did not know that it had been departed from in the smallest instance, or that it was meant to be done. If that should be the case, or appear to be in view, he again pledged himself to the House, that he would not only resign, but from that very moment oppose the Minister to the utmost of his power. At present, however, as he saw no departure from the system that was laid down, or any intention to depart from it, he did not think he ought to quit the office he held, or desert the Ministers he had acted with.

The honourable Gentleman said, it was nothing new for him to give an opinion on the American war. He had often spoken of it very fully, and he believed that Gentlemen even to this day were quite undetermined upon it. For his part,

he had always considered the granting independence to America as an evil that was forcing itself upon this country. At first he confessed he had been much against it; but various circumstances had occasioned him to alter his mind, and he was now convinced that the granting the independence of America was the only means of bringing about a peace with that country; and he understood that the present Ministry were for granting the independence of it: if they were not, he was greatly deceived. He did not pretend to the shining faculties and splendid talents of the right honourable Gentleman, (Mr. Fox,) but he did lay claim to a common understanding; and, if he did know any thing at all, he certainly knew, that he was promoting, by his continuing in office, the independency of America. This, he thought, ought to go abroad as soon and as fully as possible; for he thought it very material indeed, that the people of America should know that the present Ministry had the best intentions towards them.

He thought the debate, that had arisen upon the resignation of the right honourable Gentleman, (Mr. Fox,) of such vast consequence, and so serious a nature, that too much openness could not be used on the occasion. He would therefore state to the House the articles which the present Ministry subscribed to upon coming into office, which were five; and not one of which, he would venture to say, had in the least degree been departed from. The five articles were as follow:

That the independence of America should be acknowledged.

That the independence of the thirteen States of North America should be acknowledged in the mode of accomplishing or bringing about a peace with them.

Upon these two articles he remarked, that he had always considered this independence, come when it would, as a very great evil; but, since he found that it had become necessary, since he found that it must be acknowledged or that this country must be undone, he thought that of two evils the less should be adopted, and that America ought to be declared independent rather than that this country should be undone. In this opinion the whole cabinet had concurred; and, though there was a difference of opinion as to the means by which this business was to be done, there was but one opinion as to the main question: this would appear incontestibly from the dispatches which had been sent to America, by which an offer was to be made to the Americans, to open a negotiation with them upon this preliminary, that they were to be acknowledged

ledged an independent nation, and treated with as such. [Mr. Fox whispered across the House, that, by the resolutions of the cabinet, the independence of America was to be the *price* of peace, and therefore could not be said to be *unconditional*.]

To this General Conway replied, that the distinction was, in his opinion, futile; that the independence of America was what the people of that country had long been fighting for; and, when they found the great object for which they had supported a long, expensive, and bloody war, was attained, he was convinced that their arms would drop from their hands, and that they would think that a happy peace, which could be obtained by the attainment of that object for which they had been so long fighting. He wished that what he said might be made as public as possible in America, that the people of that country might no longer be imposed upon by those who wished for a continuation of the war by the French, or by those, among themselves, whose ambitious views might be disappointed by a peace.

The next principle upon which the new Administration had been formed, was,

That a regular system of œconomy should be established in the expenditure of the public money.

From this principle he had not as yet been able to discover a deviation: the pension granted to the right honourable Member near him, did not appear to him a departure from it: Indeed he knew nothing of it originally, and had heard of it only very lately; but he could not but approve of it; the honourable Gentleman had not exaggerated an *iota*, relative to himself, in what he had said upon the subject; and he had fairly stated what related to the professional etiquette to which he had alluded.

The fourth article was, That the independence of the Irish legislature, so fully acknowledged by the repeal of the 6th of George I. should be established upon a firm system never to be departed from. From this system, the honourable Gentleman concluded that it could not be said, that the new Administration had in any degree departed.

The fifth article was, That, though the prerogative of the Crown should at all times be properly supported, a reform of the representation of the people is necessary, in order to make it the more agreeable to the Constitution.

These were the great principles upon which the administration was formed; the House could already pronounce how faithfully

faithfully three of them had been adhered to; as to the other, which related to America, time would convince them, that the cabinet were as determined to adhere to it as to the others: for his part, he thus proclaimed these to be *his* principles; hitherto, he had every reason to say, they were the principles also of the cabinet; but, if ever it should be resolved in council to depart from any one of them, he would rest satisfied to be pronounced the most infamous of men, if he should continue to act one moment with those men who should enter into such a resolution. For his part he did not mind men; he never would take a part in a scramble or quarrel for places, pension, or for power; he did not care who were the members of the cabinet, or who enjoyed power, provided those principles, which he had stated as the fundamental points of the new administration, were strictly adhered to: he looked to *measures* only, and not to *men*. He lamented as much as any man the death of the noble Marquis, which had occasioned the late division; but he saw no ground for apprehension, that the successor, who had been given to him, would not steadily pursue the true interests of his country; that he would not strictly adhere to the great leading principle relative to America, which he had stated to the House: The noble Lord in question was not satisfied at bringing himself to think favourably of American independence, to which the change of affairs had made him a convert; he went farther, and he had persuaded the King to think favourably of it also. He therefore was at a loss to discover the essential ground of difference in the Cabinet, and the cause of the separation, and the loss of the assistance of his honourable friend, which no one could more sincerely lament than he did.

For his part, there were little niceties he did not look at, nor was he ever influenced by a thirst of power, which others appeared so fond of. He acted from principle, without regard to any man or set of men; and, when the present Minister should be found to deviate from the system laid down, he would no longer continue in Administration. But, at present, he did not know, that he had in any respect departed from the principles he held, and consequently that he ought to give up his situation. It was in the prerogative of the Crown for the King to appoint his own minister, and his Majesty had thought proper to make choice of the noble Lord he had placed at the head of the treasury.

Mr.

Mr. Fox expressed his hope that the House would excuse him, Mr. Fox. if he should rise a second time, to exculpate himself from so heavy a charge as that of having quitted the service of the public without cause, and ascribed a conduct or intention to the present Cabinet which they had a right to disclaim. He was free to own that, during the long time he had sat in that House, he never rose with such a pressure on his mind, or in a situation so truly important to him. He had, however, two things that would uphold him; the one was, that what he had done had met the satisfaction of his own mind; and the other was, that there were those who were pleased to think he had done right, and concurred with him in the opinion he had of the present Minister. This, he said, was but a secondary relief, but it was a very great one.

The honourable Gentleman had read a paper over, as the articles of agreement between the ministers, that he never saw, nor ever before heard of. He was very sure that, when he was in office, no such article was agreed to as the independence of America; he meant the *unconditional* independence of America; and, if the ministry had adopted it since he left them, he was very glad that his being out of office had induced them to do what they would never do while he was in office. The honourable Gentleman and he, he said, had sometimes been together in opinion, and many times in opposition; but, however much they might have differed in *opinion*, they had never before differed in point of *fact*. He had, indeed, stated to the House, that there were *niceties* which he could not see. The right honourable Gentleman, he was very sure, had too much magnanimity of mind, too much generosity of disposition, and too much complaisance about him, to see little *niceties* that a minister might wish he should turn his eyes from. But what could he say of those *niceties*? He would tell the honourable Gentleman that what he termed *niceties* were in fact what he saw as leading immediately to the destruction of this country. The honourable Gentleman might possess a fine understanding; but, whatever his ideas might be, he would tell him, that they were all nothing unless they went into the *minutiae* of things. It was the *minutiae* of every thing that constituted its worth and excellence; and, though the honourable Gentleman might think these things *niceties* that the Cabinet had differed about, he certainly was the only one member in it of that opinion. All others, whatever their opinions might be, did think the point under discussion of the greatest importance.

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He had been charged with having betrayed a thirst after power; but in what manner had that appeared? He had determined to resign; not because he could not grasp as much power as he wished, but because he could not any longer act with his colleagues. That this was the case, and not that he had any improper ambition, he would appeal to the right-honourable Gentleman himself; for he was sure he would do him the justice to recollect and to admit, that the question about the independence of America was agitated in the Cabinet before the death of the marquis of Rockingham, and that he had actually signified his intentions of resigning BEFORE THAT VERY UNFORTUNATE EVENT TOOK PLACE*. He again appealed to the right honourable Gentleman, that he had intimated his resolution to resign BEFORE THE DEATH OF THE MARQUIS OF ROCKINGHAM was known, and even on the very day when there was great reason to hope he would live: This declaration he had made before the death of the noble marquis. If he did not actually resign before that melancholy event took place, it was because he would not accelerate it, or embitter the last moments of a venerable friend, by taking a step which he knew would give him the greatest uneasiness. But, to prove that the probability of the death of that great and good man had no influence whatever upon him in his resolution to resign, he said that, when there was every hope given by the faculty that the noble marquis was likely to recover, he had, on the very day these glad, but delusive, tidings had been brought to the Cabinet, positively declared that he must retire if such a particular measure should be adopted. He was outvoted in the Council, and that measure was adopted. Now, as he looked upon that measure to be to the last degree dangerous to this country, he owed it to himself and to his country not to remain any longer in a situation in which he could not continue to act, without renouncing his own principles, or betraying his trust with the public. He therefore could not be suspected

* This is well worthy the attention of the reader, — because, immediately upon the resignation of Mr. Fox, his enemies caused it to be circulated in the world, that he had left administration on account of the appointment of the Earl of Shelburne to the head of the treasury. General Conway certainly meant to insinuate this in his first speech: but, when Mr. Fox protested that he had signified his intention of resigning before the death of the Marquis of Rockingham, General Conway admitted the fact.

suspected of resigning from any disappointed views of being First Lord of the Treasury. He considered himself as possessing the confidence of the people ; and, if he had continued in administration, he should have most shamefully abused it ; for the people of England would have thought every thing was going right ; whereas he knew nothing was doing but what tended to the destruction of the country. The people had sent him into the ministry as their watchman, and he had thought it his duty to let them know the danger they were in. He stood in a delicate situation. It had been often said, that, while he himself and some other men should continue in office, it would be looked upon as a pledge that nothing was going forward that could be injurious to the public interest : must he not therefore deceive those who should look upon his continuance in office as such a pledge, if he should consent to retain his situation while measures were pursuing which he thought highly injurious to the public interest ? All that was great, all that was good, in the kingdom, had countenanced his retreat ; his noble friend (Lord John Cavendish) had resigned his employment ; and the public would be naturally led to presume, that, when such a character quitted the cabinet, no man of character ought to remain in it.

If the higher sense of duty had not compelled him (Mr. Fox) to resign, he had many very powerful inducements to keep him in the Cabinet. He would not say that he was such a Stoic as to wish rather to be neglected than courted ; to prefer poverty to riches, inconvenience to ease, and obscurity to splendor and power : but, when power, emolument, celebrity, and ease, were to be acquired by a base desertion of principle, an honest man could not hesitate a moment what line of conduct he should pursue. — But it was said, that he differed only for shades. Perhaps, to his honourable friend, the difference, which to others appeared of the greatest magnitude, might appear only as a shade ; but to him this difference seemed of that consequence, as to be decisive of this great question, “ whether “ we shall have peace or war ? ” And it was not a little strange that the honourable gentleman, by whose vote in the Cabinet the question was decided, should have had so little penetration as not to discover that the fate of the empire, and not a little shade of difference, depended upon his vote. But it was the fate of his honourable friend to be left to discover those things which struck every man alive ; and experience ought to have sharpened his penetration. In the year 1766, when his ho-

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honourable friend had voted for the repeal of the Stamp-act, he never dreamt that the idea of taxing America would revive. He had then the security of almost every man in the present Cabinet: the present Lord Shelburne was then Secretary of State: the then Chancellor had signed a strong protest against taxing America: the Duke of Grafton was at the head of the Treasury. The characters of all those ministers were as pledges that the system of taxing America was at an end. But so greatly had his honourable friend been deceived, that he had since been obliged to fight hard to put an end to a war entered into solely for the purpose of raising a revenue in America: his efforts had been successful; he had crushed that war. But after he had succeeded, and carried the address of that House to the foot of the throne for putting an end to the American war, he was willing to give up the honour of it to the Earl of Shelburne, and to say that it was that noble Lord who had made the King think favourably of the independence of America: that House had spoken out; it had spoken the voice of the people; and the King must have listened, as no doubt he was well inclined, to their voice. True it was, the Administration, of which he himself had lately formed a part, was a popular one; but he could not call it the Earl of Shelburne's Administration; they did not go into office with him; he had called upon them, in the name of his Majesty, to invite them to the Cabinet; there was another great character in his Majesty's council, (the Lord Chancellor,) — who could not be said to have gone in upon popular grounds, — that learned Lord had, in conjunction with Lord Shelburne, treated with them, and brought them into the Cabinet. The country had now an Administration, which could not be that popular Administration to which his honourable friend had alluded; it was now the Administration of a man, who was gigantic in promises but a pigmy in performance; a man, who could not think of reformation with temper, however loudly he might speak about it; a man, who would declare that the influence of the crown ought to be diminished, but who would, at the same time, say, that the King had a right to use his negative in passing laws, and would threaten with the exercise of that negative all those who should attempt to move any bills that went to retrenchment. Such was the man now at the head of the Treasury: the principles of the late Ministry were now in the Cabinet: and the next thing he should look for would be, to see the late Ministers themselves again in office. He was not

to be reasoned out of his senses by his honourable friend ; for, if it was now the intention of the Cabinet, as he said, to grant independence to America, it was an intention very lately adopted ; and he found that he, in fact, had much more weight *out* of the Cabinet than ever he had *in* it. He had never before seen the papers from which his honourable friend had stated his four great principles, and therefore he could not be answerable for their contents ; but thus much he could assure the House, that he differed from the Cabinet on this subject, because he found the majority of them averse to that idea of unconditional independence to America, which he conceived to be necessary to the salvation of this country to have granted. If, since he quitted his employment, his late colleagues had changed their opinion, he rejoiced at the event ; and would feel himself satisfied, if the sacrifice, he had made to his principles, should ultimately be serviceable to this country.

He was willing to allow the right honourable Gentleman every praise that was his due, and he was certainly equal to any man for the purity of his intentions ; but, at the time he said this, if any one should ask him, who, of all the men that ever lived, had done his country most mischief, he would say the honourable Gentleman ; if he had a thousand ideas he would sacrifice them again and again to the being well with those for whom he conceived a partiality.

He doubted not but that the right honourable Gentleman's stay with the present Ministry would be of a very short duration, and that he would before long be glad to make his retreat from them. He should not, therefore, be angry with him and his friends that they were erecting a fortress in which he might take shelter when he should find himself, as he trusted he would before long, obliged to fly from those men he was acting with and supporting, in the same way he did the Administration that before supplanted the noble Marquis's Administration.

The honourable Gentleman said, he had always considered himself a person that House could send into Administration as one in whom they could confide ; and, while he continued in it, it would be very natural for them to consider every thing right. As he could not be of that opinion, and as his being in office would mislead the public, he had no other way in which to shew himself an honest man but to resign. Nay, had any one individual elector of the city he had the honour to represent asked his opinion of the Ministry, he could not

have given such an one of them as would have justified his continuing in office. He declared, upon his honour, that he had no private motive for his conduct. He always had acted, and always would act, upon public grounds. Had he not given proof of his public spirit? Was it nothing to give up a splendid situation, a most lucrative office, and extensive patronage? To say that he had no ambition, or that it was a matter of indifference to him whether he was poor or rich, would be highly ridiculous and what he would not affect. He had his ambition as well as other men, and also his desires of wealth; but these he had relinquished to the more pleasing impulse of an honest mind. The emoluments of his office had been rather convenient to one who had not a large fortune to boast of, and his situation was highly acceptable to him, because it enabled him to oblige those he loved and respected, and who had served him most disinterestedly. The number of Eleven in a Committee of Council, he certainly thought too great; and he was of opinion, that those Ministers, who hold great responsible situations, should have more interest in the Cabinet than those members of it, who attended merely to give counsel, but without holding responsible situations. He took notice of the honourable Gentleman's assertion, that the King was at liberty to appoint his own Minister, and he did not mean to dispute the right, but he had at the same time a right to resign; that right he had exercised, not from any personal consideration, but because he had the confidence of that House when he went into Administration, and was thereby bound in honour not to stay any longer in it than while he could approve of its measures. What he meant by a divided Cabinet was, that it was well known that the Members of it would vote differently from each other before they came to business.

The honourable Gentlemen drew a comparison between the late noble Marquis and the present first Lord of the Treasury, and was of opinion that it would by no means tell to the disadvantage of the former. He reprobated and derided the idea of the present minister continuing in power; and doubted not but that the time would shortly come, when those who did not see as he did would behold the folly and wickedness of the present system. He knew that every influence would be used, and he knew that influence was great; but he knew they had not the confidence of the people, and that they never would be able to pass themselves upon the public as the ministry Lord
Rockingham

Rockingham formed; but would be properly known, as being of the very same complexion as the old ministry, whose misconduct had undone us.

And here another reason occurred to him for his retiring, and it arose from the appointment of Lord Shelburne to the office of first Lord of the Treasury. The patronage of that place was undoubtedly great; and whoever fills it must have power, much more power than any other member of the cabinet. Now it was but just and fair, that those, who went into office upon certain public principles, should be satisfied that none were introduced into the cabinet who were hostile to those principles; and they either should have a right to retire, or to have a voice in the appointment of all persons who should be nominated to fill those vacancies that might happen. When that power was taken from them, their power was at an end; and, if the king had a right to nominate his ministers, his counsellors had a right to retire whenever they thought fit. But there was no question of *right* in the business; the right was not to be disputed on either side; but, the moment he was called upon for reasons for having quitted his employment, that moment it was pronounced a matter in which expediency, not right, was involved. To be accused in this case amounted to a justification of the principle, — a minister was to exercise his right to retire whenever it should appear to him that he ought to do it. He had been since told, that his objections might have been removed without any separation or division in the cabinet: this he might have thought probable, if those persons upon whom he could most depend had remained in the council after him; but, when he found they had also retired, then he confessed that the very steps taken to convince him, that his objections might have been removed without a division, had tended only to alarm him more.

He concluded by observing, that he should have been made indeed, if, having been placed as a watchman in a tower, he remained an unconcerned spectator while he saw the enemy at work in undermining it, and had not hung out the flag of distress to warn people of their danger. He again said he was now about to build a fortress to which all those might fly who should hereafter find it unsafe to trust their fortunes and characters in the tower from which he had fled; and he made no doubt but, sooner or later, he should see his honourable friend and others fly to it for shelter.

General

General
Conway.

General *Conway* affected to take all the strictures on his abilities and conduct, such as they were, which came from the honourable Gentleman, in good part. He regretted the assistance and countenance of his late friends with great sincerity; but their resignation on this occasion he could not help censuring, as inimical to the prosperity of those measures in which this country is at present so fatally and deeply engaged. The honourable Gentleman over the way, he said, was incapable of misunderstanding or misrepresenting what fell from him; certainly he had stated fairly and distinctly the great and leading objects for the accomplishment of which the administration under the late Marquis of Rockingham was formed; and these objects, he affirmed, were still the avowed and invariable objects of the present. He might mistake, or be misled, or deceived, as the best and wisest of men often were. But he was sure his intentions were honourable, as they had always been undisguised. His head or his judgement might err, as he was sensible of their weakness in a thousand instances: but he would boldly, publicly, and on all occasions, answer for his heart. He might not have expressed himself so clearly, accurately, or guardedly, perhaps: but he was not conscious of qualifying, much less of altering, any of his well-known sentiments on these topics.

The leading principles, to which he understood the cabinet under the Marquis of Rockingham and under the Earl of Shelburne directed their principal attention, were those he had already stated. It was, in his opinion, as much the intention of the present as of the late premier, that the most unlimited independence to the thirteen states of North America should form the basis of all our subsequent negotiations with them, — that this should be explicitly and unreservedly allowed them even in the very mode of carrying on all farther intercourse with them, — that a new and regular system of œconomy should be forthwith established in every part of the public expenditure, — that the absolute independence of the Irish legislature, as acknowledged by the repeal of the act in the sixth of George the Third, should be established on the most permanent foundation, — that a reform, equally liberal, effectual, and immediate, should take place in the civil-list and other departments of state, — and that every necessary step should be adopted for reducing or diminishing the pernicious influence of the crown in both houses of parliament.

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On these great and fundamental points he had already commented to the House, and was now ready to repeat the strongest declaration they had then extorted from him. It was in the sincerest conviction that this, and this alone, constituted the grand line of conduct, which, in preference to every other, his Majesty's ministers would uniformly and steadily pursue, he pledged himself to give them all the countenance and support in his power. The public claimed and demanded the entire assistance of every honest subject, and he should think himself guilty of something much more atrocious than the mere breach of any private friendship to withstand it. The first political object with him was to know specifically what he owed to his country, what in certain circumstances was his duty, what he should do, and how he should do it. He never saw or felt more distinctly and easily than he now did both what the requisitions of the public were, and in what manner it became him not to disappoint them. The system of the present administration, as he had just detailed it, consisted of various particulars, but was every where distinct and intelligible. The instant the cabinet betrayed the least symptom of departing from the smallest tittle of any or either of these important outlines, he would readily and eagerly adopt the example of his honourable friend. He would not think his honour or his conscience safe in deviating from this broad and beaten ground of politics in the least. He was obliged to the honourable Gentleman for his kind and very flattering opinion; but he did not think himself altogether liable to the censure implied in the compliment so handsomely paid him. He was for public measures, not men. While the former were pure, were stamped with the public advantage, it was indifferent to him who had the power. He had no object but one. He trusted his actions were guided solely and always by the public good; and whoever accorded with him, in facilitating this great end, was entitled, in his opinion, by every possible tie, to his countenance. For the merits of the late first Lord of the Treasury he had the most serious esteem. His personal and social qualities and accomplishments were as valuable and exemplary as they were uniform and rare. But why degrade the living by an ill-timed compliment to the dead? The Earl of Shelburne was not the less respectable that his predecessor was a man of uncommon worth. No. There was an instance of merit in Lord Shelburne that it was but justice to mention to the House. His Lordship, so far from renewing the old exploded politics, had been able to convince his royal master, that a declaration

tion of American independence was, from the situation of the country, and the necessity of the case, the wisest and most expedient measure that government, from the pressure of present circumstances, could possibly adopt. This he observed was a satisfactory reason to his mind, that nothing less than such a measure in its utmost latitude, was certainly meant by the cabinet. And while he had this confidence in the integrity and candour of ministers, sorry as he was to differ from his honourable friend, the duty he owed to his country, to his King, and to his constituents, made it impossible for him to do otherwise.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox lamented the necessity he was under of recalling the attention of the House to a great variety of particulars, which, as he thought, had already been fully stated. The ~~result~~ of the honourable gentleman's character, and his singular ingenuity, might give a turn or colour to facts, to the fallacy of whichever mind might not at first sight be sufficiently awakened. Several things of this sort had fallen from him, to which therefore he hoped he should be allowed to make some reply. To the political creed which had been read before the House, with so much solemnity, he was no party. It was a paper he had never till then either seen or heard. The subject of it was certainly not unknown to him, though the terms in general were. This was a system digested by himself, and now held out to the public as adopted by his Majesty's counsel. It was now a week since he had the honour to be one of the number. A general conversion may have been lately wrought on them. They were not, he asserted, agreed on any such system, while he knew them. To bring them unanimously to some such specific and decisive point, he had laboured ardently and assiduously with them, both individually and collectively considered, but all to no purpose. It was therefore some satisfaction to him at least, that his absence had brought that about which his presence could not. This alone was sufficient to justify his resignation to all the world. What was an honest man to do, who found himself situated as he was? He had avowed principles in this place to his friends, to his constituents, to the nation at large, with which he deemed their existence, as a great and a respectable state, inseparable. Was it ever conceived or expected, that he could continue in a responsible department of state, and be answerable in his place in this House, for those that were foreign to his heart, and in his opinion hostile to the best interests of the empire? He trusted, the public, and all who knew his habits of thinking and acting, had a better opinion both of his

his understanding and his heart.—It was in fact a conduct to which he was not equal.

His honourable friend was professedly indifferent who were the men, while the measures continued unquestionably good. It was hard to say, whether this trite maxim in modern politics was most plausible or fallacious. Were men in private life deemed wise or foolish for depositing any thing dear or valuable to them in the hands of a stranger? Was it not one of the first rules with every man who knew the world, *I will never trust whom I do not know*. Is the obligation the less strong, the less sacred, the less commanding or consequential, that the public, and not a man's own petty concerns, is the object? Who but a madman would entrust whatever he regarded as most precious and inestimable, with whoever might happen first to accept of them, without further solicitude or anxiety? Was it consistent with the least degree of penetration, sagacity, or political circumspection, to depend on the events of futurity, or the caprice of contingencies, for justifying a manifest and direct treachery to those principles which involved the most essential rights of humanity? The honourable General was certainly welcome for him in this, as in every other case, to judge for himself. He must excuse, however, his presuming in the present matter to declare against his judging for him. He would not relinquish the dictates of his own mind, especially in affairs which he had so often and so carefully revolved and viewed on all sides within himself, to any with whose principles and virtues he was not absolutely satisfied, and in whom he had not the fullest and most unbounded confidence. This was not in his power, as things were at present circumstanced. The nobleman presiding at the Treasury Board was not of a description to command that faith and trust, that cordial unanimity, which in such a predicament was wanted, was expected, was indispensable. This breach is on a public and national, not on a personal or private ground. It was his duty as much as it certainly would become a matter of common speculation and remark. He withdrew the moment the interest of his country required he should. This was the great unerring compass by which he ever had and ever would steer his political course. He had no other pilot, and would have none; and whether he should sink or swim, or live or die, he was the public's, and he never could be ill disposed of in her service.

His mind might see things on a less broad and comprehensive scale than the honourable gentleman, but he was answerable

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only for his own feelings and convictions. These might incline him to be less credulous, and fill him with more jealousies than his honourable friend was liable to entertain. What seemed only niceties in the one were, in the apprehensions of the other, matters of the greatest magnitude and importance. Were the honourable gentleman promised, without any possible condition on his part, some princely favour, as nothing less could merit his acceptance, his expectations of such an object might be reasonable, in proportion to the confidence he reposed in the party promising. But should he afterwards learn that a certain equivalent was looked for before he could receive or realize it, the extreme generosity of his noble nature would, doubtless, prevent his perceiving the difference. But the same generosity, that made him so very superior to others in their conceptions of the self-same object, ought to have furnished him with an apology in their behalf, when the timidity of their minds was alarmed by things which affected the magnanimity of his only as a few insignificant shades or niceties. He would not however either censure or defend the mental constitution God had given him. It was enough for him that his conscience did not upbraid him with acting dishonourably, or disingenuously. But he would say this must have been the case, had he not done what he did. He was impelled to take this step by every consideration that could operate on the heart and feelings of an honest man. The honourable gentleman might, but he could not, regard, without emotion or concern, who took the lead in his Majesty's councils. He deemed it a great and national object, and consequently of infinite moment to every individual, but much more so to a member of parliament; and still more so to one of his Majesty's cabinet ministers. Their honour, their duty, and every thing dear to them was at stake. What! had he and his friends laboured so long and assiduously to destroy a system, which it was now meanly, but abortively, attempted to make them accessory in reviving? And must not they see the trick that is meant to be played on them without blame? Were they censurable for detecting an artifice with which the strength and glory of Great Britain was most immediately connected? Why are not the honourable gentleman and his worthy coadjutors satisfied of their own integrity, in keeping their places, without blaming those who relinquish them? Is not their eagerness for an *eclaircissement* a certain indication that all is not right with them, even in their own opinion? He and his friends had nothing to dread from the severest scrutiny. They had acted right, because

because they had acted from fidelity to their engagements with the public, whom they never had, and never would betray; whose cause or interest they preferred to every thing, and for which they had now sacrificed whatever was most flattering to most minds.

He would not pay his Majesty so poor a compliment as the honourable gentleman certainly did, by asserting, that Lord Shelburne had convinced or persuaded him, that the independence of America was now a measure that must be adopted. It was from this House, it was from the people at large, it was from the royal observation on the daily occurrences of things, that any such generous and princely ideas were indulged in the royal breast. He therefore deemed it, if not unfair, at least a poor compliment to this House, and to the public, to attribute that to the address of an individual, which certainly originated in the sentiments and resolutions, so unanimously and boldly avowed by themselves. Though they were altogether out of the question, it was hardly treating his colleagues in office with due respect, to give Lord Shelburne the sole merit of what surely belonged to them as much as to him. Indeed, if any individual had more merit than another, in a business so much and jointly the object of all, it was, no doubt, the hon. gentleman himself. What was the purport of the motion he brought into this House, and by which the late administration was certainly annihilated? If it had any meaning, it went to the full and unconditional independence of North America. He would not think so disrespectfully of his royal Master, whose service he had so lately resigned, as once to suppose he could have a different idea from his people, on a subject so dear to their hearts, and essential to their interests. He knew the justice, the discernment, the gentleness, and the mercy of the royal character, better than to suppose he could dissent from the general opinion of the nation, on a point concerning which their sentiments had been delivered in so decided a manner. But why was not he, why was not the honourable gentleman himself brought forward, as using all their influence to carry a point which seemed a favourite one with them all? Was it not that the noble Lord in question was alone suspected of having less friendly ideas, on this topic, than any of his numerous colleagues in office.

He did not wish to bear harder on the hon. gentleman, whom he had long regarded with sentiments of the highest respect. But now that he had been somewhat involuntarily

put on his own defence, it was natural, it was necessary in his case, to state his conduct as he had stated it. A variety of things were against him. It was none of the least that he did not think himself at liberty to speak so freely and fully as he had accustomed himself to do on other occasions. Official minuteness would in this case be deemed both tedious and unexpedient. And yet, without such a very circumstantial detail as he did not think it became him at this time to give, he was sensible his defence could not be so strong, so complete, or so generally effective, as it might otherwise have been.

General
Conway.

General Conway rose, notwithstanding all the sarcasms thrown out against the trimming complexion of his present conduct, in perfect good humour, and begged the House would indulge him with a very short explanation. Giving full credit for every thing that had dropped from his honourable friend in his favour, he declared, no man had a better opinion of him, either in point of ability or principle, than he had. He allowed his influence, independent of his many and respectable connections, was, on both these accounts, peculiarly and eminently great in this House, as well as with the public. But he must beg the hon. gentleman's pardon for observing, that in mentioning Lord Shelburne's merit, in respect of his advice, and its effect on his Majesty, he was certainly not a little mistaken; for he would please to observe, the independence of North-America had never been made a question in this House. It was on this account the more necessary to discuss the question with his Majesty; which having been done repeatedly, by the first Lord of the Treasury, the effect was as he had stated it. And he must think it greatly to his Lordship's honour, who had in this instance done more than all his predecessors could do before him. He acknowledged himself not so apt to be jealous or suspicious as others of his friends: but this he was very willing to consider rather as a defect than an excellence. Nor could he by any means go so far as to assert, with the honourable Gentleman, not only that he knew the hearts of his contemporaries and associates in office, and what their present principles, from their present actions must be, but likewise what they would assuredly be and do five years hence. Such powers of penetration and foresight he freely acknowledged did not belong to him. He had no claim on a stretch of ingenuity or political sagacity so very extraordinary, and was not unwilling to leave his honourable and worthy friend in full possession of it.

Mr.

Mr. *Burke* now rose, and supported his honourable friend Mr. *Burke*. (Mr. *Fox*) in one of the most pathetic and masterly speeches that ever, perhaps, was delivered in Parliament. On his rising there was an uncommon confusion at the Bar. He directed his eye to this quarter, and with infinite spirit, and a dignity which an uncommon rectitude and force of mind alone could have inspired, said, he was peculiarly circumstanced from the delicacy which he had for one part of the House, while he felt nothing but the most sovereign contempt for the other. This to him appeared an hour, though a late one, of the greatest consequence. He was called on by a variety of circumstances to vindicate his character and principles to the public. Those who, by the present unaccountable tumult, seemed dissatisfied with his private character, knew where to find him. But he was not to be intimidated, by these little unmanly and dirty artifices, from coming forward and accounting, with much simplicity and truth, for his short stewardship, to that public, whose servant he had ever been.

About the question relating to the pension meant for an honourable Gentleman, he had but little to say. Among all the encomiums made on the character of the noble Marquis lately deceased, this was one, that he left his dearest and best friends with the simple reward of his own invaluable intimacy. This singular test of their sincerity he asked while alive, and it was a tax he left on their regard for his memory when dead. He, for his own part, had not been without his share of the one, and he would soon convince the world, he was not unequal to the other. Well might he be excused for mingling his tears with those of all descriptions and ranks of men, for the inestimable loss of this most excellent and most virtuous character. He is gone to that great and equitable tribunal where we must all go, and before which he verily believed no human soul ever appeared with more purity or less apprehension that his actions should be approved. It was impossible for his friends, or his country, the interests of virtue, and the rights of mankind, to sustain, by any contingency whatever, a loss more general and irreparable. It is the hand of Heaven, and awful as the stroke is to us, to all, we are bound to submit with decency and resignation. But what had the friends of this great and good man to expect? What did the public look for? What was the most natural step on his decease? There is not a friend in this House, in the whole nation, who does not anticipate the idea, Had not this eminent and venerable

rable nobleman, and for the best reasons in the world, the complete unequivocal confidence of the whole nation? Was it not then the most natural and the most proper advice that could be tendered to the Crown, that the man, of all others in the kingdom, whose qualities and virtues most resembled his, was the fittest and best qualified to supply his place. He appealed to the common sense of all, who heard him, whether this was not the most equitable, eligible, and popular, method, that could be adopted. But where could we select an individual who would be found in all respects adequate to this exalted standard? He knew of but one, to whom all these amiable, endearing, and respectable, attributes, unimpaired and undiminished, were literally applicable. It was not necessary he presumed, after what he said, to mention his Grace the Duke of Portland. His great personal virtues and accomplishments, his numerous family connections, and the infinite variety of private friendships, that arose from the generosity of his nature, the extent of his fortune, and the purity of his principles, pointed him out as the only or most proper person in this country for presiding in the management of its affairs. He dared any man, all men, to bring the Earl of Shelburne's character in competition with his. The friends and admirers of this nobleman might extol him as they pleased, but he knew the principles and motives of their panegyric too well to credit above one half of their assertions. The hon. Gentleman had not, whatever his abilities and penetration were, perhaps made it so much his business to examine characters as he had. It was probable, likewise, he might be much more generous and good-natured than he pretended to be. Nor did he doubt but he knew the political principles of the noble lord in question much better than he did; but he certainly knew enough to alarm him, to put him on his guard, and to rouse the public also to a sense of their danger. He knew nothing of their cabinet intrigues; he was happy in this species of ignorance; he would therefore judge only on an ample, comprehensive, and general, zeal. The resignation of his honourable friend in this light struck him as peculiarly manly, meritorious, and patriotic. He had discernment enough to see where he was, what he was about, and the many strange events to which, by remaining in place, he was likely to be accessory. Was it not incumbent on him to be on his guard, and to give the first notice of treachery or desertion from those views to which he and his friends had bound themselves? Take his conduct in
this

this light, and it must strike you as equally honourable and equitable. He declared his most intire acquiescence in whatever his honourable friend had done. He protested the present Ministry were utterly unworthy of all confidence. He avowed boldly, and in a tone which not only demonstrated the probity of his own heart, but commanded the hearts of his auditors, that there was no confidence to be put in the Lord at the head of the Treasury: that a perfidy had mingled itself with his Majesty's councils that must prove fatal to this country, that the interests of the nation were relinquished, that the public was foully, most foully, betrayed.

Why were the present Ministry without confidence? He could tell the House at least, why they certainly had not his, and why he should think it madness in the public to give them theirs. They wanted wisdom, and they wanted constancy. And what man on earth deserved to be trusted, who had neither sense nor firmness? Was it not folly or frenzy, or something worse, that could dispose them to tamper with the feeling and hopes of the public at such a crisis as this? It was his pride, if ever he was proud of any distinction whatever, to follow in the train of the late Premier. He then knew his principles and what was expected from him. The system of action was then alike obvious, liberal, and unequivocal, to every individual member of administration. Would any man, who knows the noble Earl's desultory mode of political thinking and reasoning, dare to affirm this would be the case for the future? Had this nobleman been uniform through life in his opinions concerning the constitution and privileges of this country, supposing him right for once, what security have we that the principles he now avows will be steadily pursued? Does he not know, any other declaration at present would so effectually rouse an indignant public, as to defeat his plans for ever? Is he the man to come forward and tell you, honestly and openly, that he associates with you only for the temporary purpose of blinding the public; that the moment he has gained sufficient popularity for his purpose, he will easily find means to make you tired of your situation; and that having once established his credit by yours, it is his intention to close the partnership? He protested, in terms peculiarly solemn and sincere, that the noble Lord in the blue ribbon was much less obnoxious than the present minister. He called heaven and earth to witness, so help him God, that he verily believed the public were now in worse hands than ever.

Enough

Enough of the minister was already before the public, to convince the most obstinate individual, that it was vain to look for magnanimity and patriotism in the absence of steadiness and wisdom. And these were characteristics of a prime-minister with which this country never could, but especially at present, dispense.

He therefore declared to the House, his unalterable resolution of never holding a subordinate situation under any minister in whom he could not confide, with whom he did not think it an honour to be connected. He trusted some credit would be given him on the present occasion. His domestic sensibility had never been doubted. He had a large family and but little fortune. He liked his present office. The House and all its appendages, to a man of his taste, could not be disagreeable. Yet all this he relinquished not, the House might well conceive, without regret—for the welfare of his family was very dear to him. No man could conceive him capable in such circumstances as his certainly were, to sacrifice all this and four thousand pounds per annum for nothing. No. He did it all for that country, and that public, whose he was, and to whom he was always ready to surrender whatever he most valued in life. He had been long surfeited with opposition. Those who were familiar with his habits of living, with his manners and temper, would not call him petulant or factious. What then could induce him to leave an administration, to the reformation of which his humble endeavours had somewhat contributed? Nothing, he protested, but the sincerest regard for a public, in the service of which he wished to live and die.—He was not satisfied, because his heart would not let him confide where his duty and situation made it necessary that he should.

The noble Earl at the head of the treasury was in the habit, to be sure, of promising much more than his predecessor, whose invariable maxim it was, in no one instance of his life ever to promise more than he meant literally to perform. But different men had different minds and different ways of coming into power. It was said, why not try these men before you blame them? He would directly answer, Because he knew it impossible, in the nature of things, for them, in such a situation, to answer the wishes, with principles so flatly opposite to those of the people. Would any man in his sober senses try whether a wolf would agree with lambs? This puts him in mind of a story he read at school of Little Red Riding Hood, who, during her mother's absence, was prevailed on by a wolf to take it for

its grandmama. He would embrace the present opportunity of warning the people against any such similar apprehensions. He gathered much of his wisdom from small reading; but, should he ascend to history, and bring examples from the annals of Rome, these must strike the House as still more apposite and forcible. What would Cato have said to those of his contemporaries who should have asked him to forbear his censure of Catiline till Catiline was in power? Would he not have answered them in his usual stile of manliness and truth. What! not disarm the parricide till he has stabbed his country to the heart! Make Catiline consul! Let him set fire to the capitol! Invade the sacred mount! Demolish the temples of the gods! Murder the senators! Overturn the commonwealth! Massacre the citizens! Plunder them of their property! Devote their wives and daughters to the brutal insults of his ruffians! Where is your redress, while the dagger of the traitor, reeking with the best blood of the state, is pointed to your throat? Shall we not crush him, while yet in our power, rather than, by raising him over our heads, put our lives and properties in his? It is true, the cases are by no means similar, except in degree; but so far as they go, they are certainly the same. And the strength of the illustration, without transferring any imputation, only shews the madness of filling places of the greatest responsibility with any man not in full possession of the public confidence!

Lord *John Cavendish* stated to the House his reasons for quitting the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer; which, he said, were, briefly, that, finding a different system was meant to be pursued from the one on which the change of ministry was formed, and likewise finding that it was impossible, by any presence of his, to prevent it, he had determined to withdraw himself, that he might not divide the Cabinet, and render it a scene of confusion, as it was in the time of the late ministry; for he always should be of opinion, that a Cabinet unanimous in itself, although their measures might not be so good as could be wished, was much better for the country than a Cabinet that was divided. He was of the same opinion, he said, as the late right honourable Secretary, that he could be of infinite more service to his country by being out of office than by being in; for it appeared that the measures would be consented to, by his absence, that no argument he could make use of when present would effect. He highly esteemed, he said, several of the persons who still re-

Lord John
Cavendish.

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mained

mained in office; for he knew them to be honest, well-meaning, men; men that he had seen tried for near twenty years, and who, he was confident, would not lend a hand to any wrong measure. He should, however, keep a watchful eye over them, and lend them every assistance in his power when he thought they were doing right, and oppose them when he thought they were doing wrong.

Secretary
at War.

Mr. *Secretary at War* said, he was sorry that any dissension had happened in his Majesty's councils, as he esteemed and adored the men that composed it; and he was certain that the loss of their abilities must be materially felt at this important crisis: yet he could not help thinking they were wrong, as they were, in his opinion, too precipitate. He had assisted, many years, he said, in endeavouring to remove the late set of men, and should be sorry if any trifle should occasion such a change as to suffer them to come in again: however, he trusted the declarations of the Commander in Chief's political creed were sufficiently strong, and ought to be as a pledge to that House that he would not acquiesce in any wrong measure. As for himself, he could assure the House, that, whenever he should observe any measures going on contrary to the general rule of conduct he had for years observed, he would be as ready as any man in that House to reprobate them: but, while Government acted right, he thought it his duty to support them, let who would be at the head of the Treasury. He paid several compliments to the integrity of Colonel Barré, and said he thought no man upon earth better deserved a pension than he did for his long and faithful services.

Mr. W. Pitt.

Mr. *W. Pitt* could not help begging the attention of the House, probably for the last time this session. He should think silence, in his situation, and on a question of the most serious consequence to the nation, peculiarly culpable. He arraigned the resignation of the late Secretary with more acrimony and severity than is usual with his elegant and conciliating mode of speaking. Public men, and especially those who had pledged themselves for their principles to the public, he considered as a species of public property. In his opinion, they could not therefore recede from that station, where their service was demanded, without treachery. How had the honourable Gentleman acquitted himself of this charge? On what

what public ground had he seceded? On none.† It seemed, in his opinion, merely a contest of power: for, admitting the honourable Gentleman had split with them on some very important question, it was strange he had not once attempted to get a decided opinion of it from his colleagues in council. He had indeed declared, that it was to prevent dissensions in the Cabinet, where a material difference subsisted on some grand

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political

† Here it may not be improper to observe, once for all, that, from several hints in the preceding debate, the leading point, on which his majesty's late counsels divided, was evidently the mode of giving independence to the Thirteen United States of North America. Mr. Fox and friends, fully apprized of the extreme sensibility and magnanimity of mind which must have resulted from a long, severe, and successful, struggle for those liberties which they deemed much dearer than life, were for allowing them independence in the most unlimited and unqualified sense of the word, without stipulating for any terms or conditions whatever. Their opponents, not even capable of doing a noble deed gracefully, and still treating whatever belonged to America as a certain species of British property, were for making the most of the commodity they could. It was therefore their opinion, that this great natural right should only be tendered to the Americans on condition they were willing to embrace it as the price of peace. What was this, but the old tory language, only new modified? an affectation of insolently prescribing to those who are in every respect our equals? Sensible that every proposition, which gave the one nation the least shadow of superiority, would be spurned with indignation and contempt, the late secretary was willing the negotiation should be managed on the most liberal principles which the law of nations could suggest or authorise. Great Britain has been undone by an abortive struggle to maintain this ideal and chimerical supremacy. The shallowest politician in the kingdom knows the Americans will not have the smallest communication with us till this fatal and absurd distinction is annihilated. To this great end the politics of the Rockingham party have from first to last been gradually directed. By the hostility of the present premier to this salutary system his own was prematurely discovered. He assumes the title of exposing to sale those precious rights for which so many brave Americans have liberally bled and died. The friends of liberty were undeceived and alarmed. They saw the old system not yet radically discarded, and nobly scorned to be made the puppets of an administration which espouses principles they have all their lives regarded with the deepest abhorrence.

political question. Certainly the asseverations of the right-honourable Gentleman were entitled to credit; otherwise he should have been tempted to suspect that he had been disappointed in aiming at the Treasury, and that he had thrown up the seals in consequence of a disgust, which was not unnatural, from his want of success. The honourable Gentleman was evidently more at variance with the men than their measures, and seemed disposed, however upright the latter might appear, to regard the former only with aversion and contempt. Nor did he doubt but his ideas would meet those of a large majority, both within and without doors, in alleging that the present rupture that had happened in his Majesty's councils was not altogether free from personal pique. If no more than mere dislike to the political opinions of Lord Shelburne, how came the honourable Gentleman to accept of him as a colleague? Another honourable Gentleman (Mr. Burke) over the way, whom he always heard with much pleasure, had brought a comparison to the present case from Cato and Catiline, which, notwithstanding his apology, was in his judgement much too violent and aggravating for any such apprehension. But he would ask, in his turn, would Cato have sat in council with Catiline? Would Cato have canvassed any constitutional question with Catiline? Would Cato have suffered his Name to appear in any official business or dispatch with that of Catiline? These instances were infinitely too gross to bear repeating in the present argument. But it was said, the system on which they came into place was now to be altered. He was sorry his honourable friends were of this opinion. He, for his part, entertained no such suspicion. The objects and the measures were, in his apprehension, identically what they had been during the short administration of Lord Rockingham. In this conviction, were he called to act any part under the present, whatever the office might be, he should deem it his duty to forward the movements of government by all the means in his power. No man was a more professed and determined enemy to the late ruinous system of affairs than he was. He therefore pledged himself to the House, and to the public, that, whenever he saw things going wrong, he should first endeavour to set them right; but, failing in that effort, he should undoubtedly relinquish his political connection.

The honourable Gentleman seriously deprecated the consequences of the present dissensions in the British senate: he would

would fondly hope, however, that whatever had been urged in debate would have no unfavourable influence on the present administration, or tend to raise the least suspicion against them. He was sure nothing would be more groundless, and nothing was more calculated to render their efforts in the public service abortive. He prayed, he obtested, he conjured, the people to give the ministry their confidence. Give it, said he, that, by withholding it, you may not do an essential injury to yourselves. Give it, that our wonted prosperity and glory may return with the unanimity of the nation. Give it, that those who rejoice in our domestic animosities may be humbled, may be mortified, may be disappointed, by our union. Give it, that we may be able to transmit the many invaluable privileges, we received from our forefathers, to their and our posterity, in all their native purity and magnitude. And give it, that the blessing of a good government may not, by the insidious venom of suspicion, be converted into a curse.

Mr. Fox only begged to remind the honourable Gentleman, that what he blamed him for not doing he had actually done. He had called a meeting of his Majesty's confidential Ministers in his own house, and renewed the question so often alluded to, but with no better success than before. To them he had declared, in the most unequivocal manner, his determination. He acknowledged it to be a question of power, but denied that it contained any thing personal. He was not willing to risque so much power, where he saw, or thought he saw, so much danger. For his own part, so far was he from struggling for power, that he had absolutely determined on resigning previous to the death of Lord Rockingham, and communicated his intentions of this kind to a noble Duke. Of all the actions of his life he thought it the most important: he had therefore weighed it thoroughly before he ventured to put it in execution. He was aware the public eye was on his conduct, and knew the most substantial reasons would be expected for the part he took. He trusted no man would blame him for relinquishing a station, in which he could not serve his country, in which he must have continued an absolute cipher without value or significance, in which he thought his own honour and the interest of the kingdom in the most imminent danger. He was never at a loss to say, how such and such a Member would vote on any great political question before parliament: nor was it more difficult to foresee how such

such and such measures would be carried in the Cabinet, the moment the mover of them was known. He denied that his leaving his place was a desertion of the public service. It was as much the business of a good citizen to shift his ground, when the common good required it, as of a good general; and he was but poorly qualified for serving the people, who could not serve them out of place as well as in. It was because he thought it most eligible, that he had preferred their interest to place and power; and that, instead of abandoning, he had never more than by this last action attached himself to their cause: they had discernment enough to see it; and no sophistry, whatever effect it might have on the partizans of Ministry, would ever be able to prejudice the people of England against those who were really their friends. He denied likewise, and in the same decided manner, that ever he considered Lord Shelburne as a colleague; in forming the late Administration he acted only the part of a negotiator. He did not come in as one of them: they never owned him as heartily or sincerely one with them in those great points, for the accomplishment of which they pledged themselves to the public.

Mr. Burke.

Mr. *Burke*, in reply to Mr. Pitt, vindicated his bringing up the names of Cato and Catiline in the argument on what he took to be an obvious principle in all just reasoning, that, whenever it is necessary to put mankind on their guard against any real or fictitious evil, the instances by which you urge them cannot be too strong. He acceded to the declaration of his honourable friend, in denying that ever the present Minister was considered as one of those who had been so instrumental in driving out their predecessors: he had stuck to them, the honourable Gentleman observed, like a piece of occasional patchwork, but never incorporated with the body or made any essential part of the system. By trimming between all parties, he had certainly never been of any. To this moment he knew not what his Lordship's political creed was: he had pledged himself for no specific principles, and might change them at will without incurring the imputation of apostacy. This was the fashionable plan, on which modern politicians seemed so fond of forming themselves. It certainly had its advantages. It was mighty convenient for those, who acted without truth, or conscience, or principle. Unfortunately for him and his, he had not yet been able to reach this summit of philosophical indifference to all the principles of right and wrong. Indeed the subject was too serious for pleasantry.

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He abhorred that sort of accommodation, which did not leave a man possessed of a single principle he could call his own. He was sorry to see a young but honourable Gentleman, [Mr. Pitt,] of such promising talents, attaching himself thus early to a school, which would certainly endeavour to destroy all the culture and all the maxims, for which he stood so much indebted to one of the greatest and brightest men this country had ever produced. He begged leave to assure that honourable Gentleman, that all the reasons he had now urged against the resignation of the late Secretary were, in every respect, the very same, which, on a similar occasion, he had heard argued against his own illustrious father. It filled him with regret for the fate of the capricious creature, man, to see him made in this manner the incessant sport of such a variety of contradictory sentiments and ideas. For here the son rifles the enemies of his father of all their deadliest weapons, to discharge them in the face of his friends!

Mr. *Solicitor Lee*, with a vast fund of good nature, mixed with no inconsiderable share of sarcasm, happily restored the humour and recovered the attention of the House. Few could suppose he had any see in view for what he was now going to say. He pursued a very different course; he, who was lately a great crown lawyer, was likely to become once more a simple gentleman. It was rather singular to see one, holding such an office as he did, resign of his own accord. But he held it to be the duty and honour of every honest man to resign, the moment he found measures carrying forward to which he could not give his assent. He owed his seat and his place, he owned, entirely to the late marquis of Rockingham. And he was certainly proud of a patron of whom all mankind spoke well. No man was ever better qualified than he was for the high department he filled in the state. He was not destitute of any one official requisite. The Minister of such a country as this must have other endowments than great and splendid talents. These must not be wanting, but will not do alone. He, who is most likely to make the best use of such an inordinate accession of power, must join, to a sound head, the greatest goodness and purity of heart. Were these the reputed and notorious characteristics of the nobleman now exalted to this principal department of state? He cared not who might blame him, but he had his doubts of it. The noble Earl, to be sure, possessed great talents, had some friends, and was now in a way to make more. Still he did not wish to see him where
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Mr. Solicitor Lee.

he was. To put him at the head of affairs, in this blunt and open-hearted country, was to put him out of his element. The people of England are incapable of refinement or finesse, and seldom fond of submitting to the government of those who are. Versality of genius was of little use in life, and very incompatible with the uniform regularity of office. Why were the noble Lord's promises so much the subject of derision, as all the world knew them to be? It was this unsteady turn of mind that addicted him to the unhappy habit of so frequently forgetting his word. He had heard of his late conversion to the present popular doctrine of independence. Perhaps his recent orthodoxy may procure him the momentary semblance of popularity. He wished the fact might be as it had been stated. For his own part, sudden conversions were held by him as a certain species of witchcraft. They were equally the fictions of selfishness, suggested by some sinister design, and he was always just as much inclined to believe the one as the other. A man is good for little, whose mind is not in general made up by the time he is turned of forty. He, who is then to seek, at least in politics, will seldom or never be found. The noble Earl uniformly opposed the bill for allowing independence to America. And could any man imagine he would now change his mind, unless to answer particular purposes? It is not consistent with the common modes of human conduct. His staunchest advocates would not hold him up as more, because others might think him less, than man. The treasury requires a sober, honest, able, industrious, and steady commissioner at its head. It is not an ostentatious affectation of uniting the man of science and the fine gentleman, the technical jargon of arts, and the gibberish of courts, the scholastic nostrums of pedantry, and the abstruse theorems of mechanism, that will create consequence, respect, and veneration, in this high office! Who knows not how easily a head filled with such materials may be turned round. His conscience would not allow him to approve of such a man as the prime mover in the British cabinet.

It could not escape his notice, that an honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) had taken part in the debate, just to hint a certain share he was, doubtless, to possess in the new arrangement. He was sure he would do credit to any scene in which he could become an actor. But was there not an obvious intention of trifling with the patience of the people, by thus bringing forward one of their favourites as a compensation for insulting another?

another? His youth and want of experience, were great obstacles to his expertness in the mechanical part of the business, which could only be acquired by attention and practice; and, certainly, the confidence of the people would not be much increased, by putting the complicated business of our finances into the hands of a boy.

Many gentlemen, he said, complained heavily of the dissensions into which the cabinet had lately been divided; but he had not heard one step forward and announce the Earl of Shelburne equal to his late ostensible department. Who has yet boasted of the national confidence he commands, or the general joy his recent elevation has diffused among the populace? He wished to see and hear the man who could boldly invest his lordship with these essential requisites to his official character. It was a new doctrine to him that we must have a premier on trial, as we sometimes take servants, and turn them away at an hour's warning. Much had been said of his Majesty's prerogative in the choice of his ministers. He did not think a British monarch, who loved his people, would be fond of harbouring in his bosom an object they disliked. He was certain he did not deserve the name of a —, who would dismiss any friend of theirs from his councils with as little ceremony as he would his footman.

Commodore *Johnstone* said, he should not give any opinion of his own; only remark how exceedingly curious it was in gentlemen, on all sides, to pay great compliments to the character and conduct of Col. Barré, and at the same time to reprobate the character and conduct of the Earl of Shelburne; for he had always understood, he said, that Col. Barré was the representative of Lord Shelburne in that House, and a better representative no man need have. He thought such behaviour was inconsistent, and therefore wished the debate might end without any farther altercation.

Commodore
Johnstone.

Sir *Edward Deering* rose to acquaint the House, that he was turned of forty; that he had several times since that period changed his mind, and was daily doing so: he did not like the present set of men, he said, as he had formed an affection for the last; and it was an invariable rule with him, when once he had fixed on men, to support them right or wrong; it made no matter; his intention was good, and, if they led him into an error, it was their fault, not his; he liked to stick to the substance, and not wander about after shadows.

Sir Edward
Deering.

Most of the principal speakers having frequently risen to explain, without suggesting any thing new on the argument, Mr. Coke said a few words in his own vindication for making the motion, and then very politely withdrew it.

The question was put, and adjourned without a division.

THE

T H E

Ministers Defence in the House of Lords,

JULY 10, 1782.

THE Duke of *Richmond* said, that, in the present circumstances of this country, and as parliament was to rise the next day, it might be, and he certainly thought it was, necessary in him to say a few words in explanation of his conduct, in continuing in office at a time when a very unhappy separation had taken place between him and some men, for whom he entertained the highest, the justest, reverence and regard. He considered it as due to him from his country; for every man was responsible to his country for the part he should take in so critical, and he would add in so alarming, a moment. The unhappy event of the death of the Marquis of Rockingham, a person who of all others was the best qualified and the most proper to fill the office of prime-minister of this country, and whose loss he was afraid this country would never recover; — the melancholy event of his death made it necessary that the vacancies should be filled up; and he believed there would have been no other change in his Majesty's councils than what would have been necessary to the filling up of that vacancy, if a right honourable Gentleman, one of the Secretaries of State, and a noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had not at this critical moment withdrawn themselves from the Cabinet. Of the right honourable Gentleman he could not, in delicacy, speak so freely as he might think. The circumstance of their relationship would prevent him from declaring with what reverence and admiration he looked up to that gentleman's wonderful talents, and prevented him from giving scope and expression to the sentiments of praise and affection which he felt to be his due. He would content himself therefore with saying, that to his astonishing powers, joined to his most zealous and laudable perseverance in the House of Commons, more perhaps than to that of any other man in this kingdom, was owing their happy success in the overthrow of the late wretched system, and in the discharge of that set of ministers who had involved their country in all its difficulties. The separation of that honourable Gentleman from his Majesty's councils he must therefore view as one of the most fatal and alarming circumstances which had

Duke of
Richmond.

happened to this country for many years. It was by powers such as distinguished his exertions,—by a penetration such as he always exercised,—and by a comprehension of mind which he, of all other men, possessed in the greatest extent,—that this empire could yet be saved, if it was to be saved at all. To see such a man averse to administration must be a melancholy thing for a country at any time: but, for this country, at such a time as the present, it was a most serious and affecting calamity.

The noble Earl in the blue ribbon was now appointed by his Majesty to the place of first Lord of the Treasury, and undoubtedly there was in some degree a change of government by their being in some degree a change of men. It was his clear and precise idea that a change of men did form a change of government; for it was necessary to all good, solid, and substantial, government, there should not only subsist, among the men who composed it, an agreement of sentiment, of principle, and of system, but there must also be a cordiality and affection which must bind them to one another. So much he thought necessary with respect to the formation of a Cabinet of men attached to one another by similar principles as well as by habits; and so far he thought that men were connected with measures, and to be chosen and preferred in the formation of all good government.

It was not, however, to be said, that there was in fact a complete change of government in the present instance, or any thing like it; for, on the late memorable change, when his Majesty was most properly advised by his parliament to change his ministers, the greatest part of those who now formed the Cabinet were called to his Majesty's councils, and he, who was then appointed a Secretary of State, was now Prime-Minister. The question was, Whether there was a change of principles and of system? He held himself pledged to his country for his continuance in office only while the system upon which they came into office continued to be pursued. He did not think that he should be justified in taking notice of, or in publishing in any respect, what might have been the transactions of another place; but the declarations which were made in that House their lordships were all acquainted with, and he should take the liberty of repeating those which the noble Earl in the blue ribbon, who was now prime-minister of this country, had made in his place but a few days ago, because those declarations had satisfied his mind, and given him the assurance that the noble Earl was determined to persevere in those principles upon which

which they all came into place. He must, at the same time, take the liberty to say, that he trusted to those assurances thus publicly made; but he should trust no longer than while he saw them religiously observed. He pledged himself to his country, that he should watch with the most suspicious eye on every measure, and it was the duty of every member of that House to watch with a jealous eye the conduct of the king's ministers; and he gave the most solemn pledge and assurance which it was in his power to do, that he should retire from the situation which he had the honour to hold on the instant he discovered a deviation from those principles which the noble lord had declared to be the principles of the system upon which he should act. But, in order to discover whether the declarations which the noble lord had made were adequate to the expectations of the people, and whether they amounted to all that was demanded of them when they first came into office, he would enumerate the principles upon which they set out, and which, to his clear conviction, the noble Earl admitted; and he was glad that he had an opportunity of doing it while that noble Earl was present, as, if he made the smallest misrepresentation, he would have the goodness to set him right, in the confidence that he did not wilfully misrepresent.

First, then, they had come into office with the determination of pursuing peace with America, and without tying himself down to precise terms and distinctions; he should say that they perfectly and clearly understood it to be a matter of agreement, that the independence of America should not stand in the way of this peace. This he considered as the principal feature of their administration, and that which was most directly and expressly looked for at their hands; it was that from which they could not depart, for one moment, without deceiving, cheating, and injuring, their king and country; and if, at any time, a disposition should appear to deviate from this ground, and to renew that abandoned system by which this country had been brought into all her distress, he should consider that as the moment for him to resign his office, and to come forward and declare to his country his reasons for so doing. His eyes should never be shut to this great feature of their system; and, remembering as he did the wise resolution of the House of Commons, and the wise address to the crown with which they followed it, for putting a period to the mad and calamitous war with North America, he should consider his Majesty's ministers as unpardonable if they shewed the most remote disposition to renew
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that war, or if they hesitated to procure a termination of hostilities, on account of granting to America unlimited, unconditional, and absolute, independence. He had the clearest conviction that the noble Earl in his speech admitted the whole extent of this principle, when he declared that he had not a difference of opinion upon this point. The noble Duke spoke very much at large upon this topic, and gave, as he always has done, the most explicit declaration, that it was his sense and conviction that we ought not to deny the independence of America upon any pretext whatever.

The next great and leading principle was, to reduce the corrupt influence of the Crown, and to govern by a system of œconomy. The noble Earl had given the most complete declaration, that this was his principle and intention; and he had delivered himself upon it in strong and decisive terms. He had said, that that corrupt influence must be abolished, and that it was the determined purpose of his soul to govern by a plan of general œconomy, and that he would prove the benefit of this principle, applied to all the purposes of government. Upon this declaration then he was satisfied; and particularly so, because, though the noble Earl had not expressed an opinion with respect to any one of the methods suggested for amending the constitution of parliament with respect to the state of representation, he had declared it to be his opinion that it ought to be altered; and that a great, substantial, and general, reform should be made, in which the theory of our Constitution should be applied to the practice, and they should be made to go hand in hand.

To declarations so specific and clear, he must give his praise and his consent. After such declarations, he could not withdraw himself; and he continued, as he thought it his duty to do, to apply all his knowledge, and to employ all his time, in his Majesty's service, in that office which he held, and which, though not one of the important departments of State in which he should have a particular share in the execution of national measures, was more than proportioned to the limit of his abilities. He at the same time begged again to be understood, and the noble Earl would pardon him for again saying, that he trusted to the declaration, but he would trust no longer than the performance was exactly measured to the promise. He most earnestly recommended to the noble Lord to turn his mind to the constitution of Parliament. The procuring a peace with America was the first and most

most immediate object of his administration : but it would be fit, wise, and honourable, in him, also to attend to the other great and important object, — that of altering the state of representation, and rendering it in some measure more adequate to its principle and object. At present it hath neither truth nor decency, and was as distant from the ancient constitution prescribed as from what the interests of the kingdom required. The noble Earl would make himself memorable in all future ages if he would do this : he would exalt his name, and would deserve more from his country than any former minister by whom Great-Britain was ever benefited or adorned.

Thus much he had thought proper to say : for the reasons which he had mentioned, he had not withdrawn himself from the Cabinet, along with men for whom he entertained the greatest veneration that he did for any men on the face of the earth ; and, so long as these public declarations of the Minister were strictly, uniformly, and fully, adhered to, he should not think himself justified in retiring. — But, if they should be abandoned or dropt ; if the system should be changed, or there should even appear an inclination to desist from carrying into effect those promises which had been made, he should consider himself as pledged to his country to retire, and declare his reasons for so doing. In order, therefore, that he might do his duty, and discharge his trust with fidelity, he assured the House again, that he should have his eyes open and his senses about him.

The Earl of *Shelburne* thanked the noble Duke for the manly, noble, and virtuous, part which he had acted, as well as for the candid manner in which he had spoken that day. He thanked him for the degree of confidence which he had been pleased to place in him, from the public declarations which he had made, and which was all that he desired or expected to receive from any man. He never desired nor expected that men should give him credit for performances merely because he had promised, or give him credit for the effects of profession before they had taken place. All that he desired was, that men should trust him as they found, and go with him only so long as they felt that he was right. He was happy that he had an opportunity of saying a few words on the present circumstance of the change which had taken place in the councils of his Majesty. He must again thank the noble Duke for the very clear and candid manner in which he had

Earl of
Shelburne.

had acted through the whole of this business, and by which he had demonstrated the extreme fairness of his nature, as well as the love which he bore for his country, in studying only its welfare, in the measures that were pursued, and in wisely and honourably distinguishing measures from men. He had stated with the utmost clearness and candour the declarations which he had made, and the principles on which they had come into power together about three months ago; and he declared that he avowed, adopted, and repeated, all those declarations, as the principles of his mind, and the features of the Administration, at the head of which, by the unfortunate death of the noble Marquis, he was now placed.

He begged leave to say, that his being placed there was not the consequence of his personal ambition, of his love of power, or his lust of patronage; for, to those who knew him best, he need not say that he had, on many occasions, shewn a disinterestedness, with respect to that office, which every body would agree very ill suited with the motive of personal gratification. In all his dealing with regard to the noble marquis, now deceased, and his friends, he had shewn the best disposition to complacency; and had yielded in every thing, which he conceived could contribute to the good humour, to the cordiality, and to the perfect understanding of them all. If it had been his earnest desire to have reached the eminence on which he was now placed, he affirmed, that it was in his power before this to have gained it. He affirmed, that, three months ago, when the total change was brought about, it was within his reach; but so far from grasping at the elevation, he had exerted his utmost efforts to obtain it for the noble Marquis, and to seat him at the head of the administration which was formed, in the confidence and persuasion that he was the most proper man to be placed there, and contented himself with a situation of a very different kind, but which he considered as amply equal to his talents as well as to his ambition. If it were necessary to give other proofs of his sincere dealing with that body of men, he had it in his power to shew and to prove, that he had again and again rejected offers of an exclusive nature, and resisted every attempt towards negotiations which came with the view of separating and of distinguishing between them. He had done this too, at the very time when he heard of negotiations being on the tapis with others, and which he heard of without disturbance and without a concern. Nor had he, upon the late occasion, shewn that he was infligated by any strong ambition, or by any sinister views,

views, for he had come in without making the least stipulation. He had professed himself more ready to accede than to dictate, and he had done this at a crisis when he thought it much more probable that he should have gone into retirement than be elevated to the rank which he now held. He had come into office then about three months ago, with others, on the principles which a noble Duke had enumerated with great fairness, and he averred that he had not deviated from one of those principles; but, within a very short time, two persons had withdrawn themselves from the cabinet;—a right honourable gentleman, for whose astonishing and commanding talents he entertained the highest regard; and a noble Lord, for whose distinguished purity and integrity of mind he also most justly entertained the highest esteem. The loss of such men he must lament; but he must declare, that they had departed from the cabinet on different motives. The grounds on which they professed to go out were undoubtedly not the same; the noble Lord had been with great difficulty brought into the cabinet; his love of retirement, and his distaste to a public life, rendered him extremely averse, in the outset, to accept of the office, and, upon the death of his dear and lamented friend, he could no longer endure to remain in the active scene. This he understood was the reason for the departure of the noble Lord, while the honourable gentleman professed to entertain doubts of the purity of his intentions, and of his design with respect to the principles on which they had all set out. He would presume to make this one observation, that, in a moment like the present, when the unanimity and good agreement of his Majesty's councils were so essential to our respect abroad as well as to our strength and activity at home, it was exceedingly fit that every person should be clear and precise in his opinions, before he undertook to act in disjunction with those to whom he had been before joined. It was necessary, that, before he should give the alarm that principles were abandoned or that a system was changed, he should be perfectly informed on the subject, and take care that he did not frame a hasty judgement, or outrage, for mere shades of difference in opinion, when they all solemnly and religiously had the same view and purpose, but differed perhaps a little about the means of accomplishing it. The noble Duke had taught him a very proper and becoming delicacy with respect to discussions in another place. He knew how improper and unsafe it was to allude to things which had taken place in such a manner; and therefore he should content himself with saying, that the principles

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on which he set out he still retained; and he had not the smallest scruple in restating to the House the whole he had said in a former debate. With respect to America, he had always considered her independence as a great evil, which we had to dread, and to guard against. He had spoken of it in this manner for years past, and when he believed he was joined in sentiment by every man in this country. He had always believed and declared, that the independence of America was an evil as much to be apprehended and dreaded by America as by Britain. This had always been his opinion; and he had constantly laboured, by every means in his power, to persuade men, that this was the case in his applications to private men and to public men, to individuals and to bodies of men; he had always held the doctrine, that the independence of America was an evil to be equally guarded against by both countries. He wished to God, that he had been appointed to urge that proposition, and to maintain it before the Congress. He wished to God, that he had been called to prove by argument the assertion, that the independence of America must be as prejudicial to herself as to Britain. He would have gone much greater lengths, and said much more at the bar of the Congress than he ever said in his place in the British Parliament. This had been his opinion, and it was his opinion still. He still thought that it was a great evil, but now he felt it to be a necessary evil. He was one of the last men in the country who had been brought over to agree that this country ought to acknowledge the independence of America; but circumstances, he confessed, were changed, and he was now of opinion, that it was become a necessary evil which this country must endure to avoid a greater. He did not think that his having entertained these sentiments would in any respect diminish his influence in America, or with the persons empowered by them to treat in Europe for a peace; or that it would deter them from having confidence in him. He had reason to know, from some late flattering assurances, that it would not stand in the way; and that they did not think the worse of him for having entertained that opinion. He knew of many injuries which had sprung from the too early opinion of many gentlemen, that independence should be given to them, injuries much greater than any that had sprung from his opinion. He averred, that upon this point he had been guilty of no inconsistency of character; for, all the assertions which he had ever made, and all the sentiments which he had ever delivered, he now subscribed to, and avowed. He had not changed one opinion which he had ever formed upon the subject. As far
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back as the memorable day when the Earl of Chatham gave his solemn declaration about the independence of America, he proposed a plan, which after that time that noble Earl had often spoken about; it was memorable in being the only time whenever there had been a shade of difference visible between them; on that occasion, when on one side it was proposed to grant independence to America, and on the other it was declared by the noble Earl, to be a measure which must conclude in the ruin of this country, he proposed a middle line, which was, that independence should be like the preamble to a bill, the consideration of which was adjourned until they should have settled all the provisions and clauses, and come to an agreement on all the other points in debate. This had always been his opinion, and he maintained it, as he did every other opinion which he had ever given. He had said, that, whenever the independence of America should be acknowledged, the sun of Britain would set. He wished to God that it might not prove so. He had said, that when the independence of America should be acknowledged, this country would lose its rank, respect, and importance, among nations, and sink into a little insignificant state. He wished to God it might not prove so. But these had been his opinions, and they were not changed. The noble Duke had stated his opinion fairly, when he said that it was the principle of their administration to pursue peace, and that the independence of America should not be an obstacle. Upon this point then he did not deviate from the principle on which he had come into office; nor had he in any one point. He had been anxious to keep the members of the cabinet in good humour with one another; he had conceded to many things, and he would be happy to concede all that he possibly could, provided it was consistent with his honour, his feelings, and his principles. He said, that he was no enemy to men; that he was, and always had been, the friend of measures rather than of men. For the last seventeen years of his life he had lived in habits of the closest intimacy with the Earl of Chatham, who was now no more, and from him he had imbibed the principle of studying and pursuing measures only and not men. Whether men were said to belong to this faction or to that; whether they went by one name or by another, if they agreed cordially to pursue good measures, it was a matter of perfect indifference to him whence they were, or how they had come together. Unhappily, the cause of this division, which they were now lamenting, had its rise in a policy opposite to his; in a principle

which he abhorred; a principle which sought men in preference to measures; which sought men first, before it began to consult about measures; and which thought that all security, as well as all success, depended upon name. Unfortunately for this country, there were some of the men, who formed the administration which had lasted but for a short time, of that opinion; fortunately for this country, there were many of that administration of another principle, who preferred the welfare of their country to the splendour of a name; and he consoled himself for the absence of the two, which had departed from the cabinet, in the presence of the eight great and good persons who remained. The noble Duke in the blue ribbon, and others, claimed his highest encomiums, who had the greatness of mind to look forward only to the good of their country, and for that good had separated from dear and early friendships, to which undoubtedly they must be attached by the strongest ties.

But he said he had, during the last three months, conceded much, and taken infinite pains to make every thing pleasant, provided he did not thereby make a sacrifice of a principle. The recollection of a cant phrase, he said, was only valuable, because it brought back also to mens minds the reasoning with which it was accompanied. He would therefore mention a phrase which he had made use of before the change would take place, which would in a great degree account for his conduct lately. He had said, that he would not wish to see the King of England made a King of Mahrattas, where a body of nobility make choice of a Bashaw, who holds complete sway over the King, and he is rendered in course a mere puppet. He would not wish, nor should he ever suffer, while he sat in the Councils of his Sovereign, the royal prerogative to be so far destroyed as that a Government should be appointed against the will of the Crown. He could not be more explicit; but this would be sufficient to shew that the cause of the late resignation was at least differently accounted for: But whether it was, as had been asserted in another place, on account of a defalcation from principle in him, or, as he related it, owing to a contention about party and power in others, time only could reveal. It was his misfortune, that things which were now on the tapis could not be laid on the table of the House, but, when the secret was over, which he hoped would be by the opening of the next Session, the truth of the matter would be rendered manifest to all men.

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With respect to another material principle which had been mentioned, that the corrupt influence of the Crown should be abolished, and that Government should be administered by a system of general œconomy, he spoke, he said, with the most direct meaning: He thought that it would be infamous to govern by corruption, and it was his determination to pursue a great general line of œconomy through all the different departments of the State; to make a liberal use of the Commission of Accounts; and to take every step, which the power of office, or the power of Parliament, could convey for enforcing this principle.

As to the pomp and patronage of the place of first Lord of the Treasury, great as he knew it to be, he never did form so high an idea of his importance as he had reason to do within the last ten days; for, by the warmth of the contention, and by the struggles which had been made for it, its patronage must be a powerful agent in Government, since without this patronage it seemed to be the opinion that it was impossible to govern. Now he intended to shew, that this patronage should be properly, liberally, and justly, exercised. That, instead of going to the purposes of corruption, for which it was never intended, it should revert to the English property, from which it came, and where alone it could be properly applied. Here the noble Earl took notice of a matter which had occupied the attention of the other House, the matter of a pension to Colonel Barré, and of another to lord Ashburton. He justified these grants to these two old and dear friends of his, upon the particular circumstances on which they were given; and said, that his acts were open; they were public and avowed; the nation saw his price; he did not use the covert means, and the mere secret methods of others, in doing that which he thought right. After a great deal of other matter, and many other observations thrown out by the noble Earl, he came to a conclusion; declaring again, that he wished only to have the confidence of men, in so far as his actions and words agreed; and, in expressing his hopes, that with the confidence of the country, and the earnest, anxious, and united, efforts of a free people, we should yet be able, with the loss of America, to see the dawn of a new æra; or, at least, that, instead of sinking into night, we should be able to preserve a twilight, to give us time to breathe, until another, and another, and another, day of light and glory should arise to Britain.

The

Duke of
Richmond.

The Duke of *Richmond* rose to explain. When he called himself a Whig, he conceived himself to be one of that body of men, who, acting upon Revolution-principles, and professing themselves friends to the liberties of the people, must always be backed by the countenance and support of the people: if this was a party, his Grace confessed that he would always rejoice to see the country governed by such a party. As to the independence of America, he thought it, as well as the noble Lord near him, a very great misfortune to the kingdom; but he thought it would be a still greater misfortune to attempt to keep America dependent against her own will; and he thought it the most absurd and extravagant way, that could possibly enter the head of a madman, to endeavour to bring America to a dependence upon this country, by putting the people of it out of the protection of the laws; for, where there was no protection, there could be no allegiance.

Earl of
Shelburne.

The *Earl of Shelburne* got up again; he said, if a Whig was a man who acted upon Revolution principles, and was a friend to the constitution, and to the liberties of the people, he would be proud to call himself a Whig; men of that description must necessarily be supported by the people; and such men ought of course to govern the country, because in the hands of such men the constitution would ever be held sacred. As to the American war, he had ever been as great an enemy to it as the noble Duke; he had always contended, that it was unjust in its principle, because it militated against that great maxim of our constitution, which declares, that English subjects, in whatsoever quarter of the globe, had a right to the benefit of the British constitution, the most boasted and peculiar franchise of which was, to be governed by those laws only which they themselves had enacted, either in person or by their Representatives. That war was now at an end; no Minister could, if he were mad enough to desire it, prosecute it any longer; the resolutions of Parliament, and the general sense of the nation, were against it; and here his Lordship thought it proper to declare, in order to quiet the alarms that had been industriously raised in the minds of men, that nothing was farther from his intention than to renew the war in America; the sword was sheathed, never to be drawn there again.

T H E

Minister convicted in the House of Commons,

JULY 11, 1782.

MR. *Burke* was sorry he did not see a noble Lord, late Mr. *Burke*, Chancellor of the Exchequer, nor a right honourable Gentleman, in their places; as he should have wished them to answer for themselves, which they certainly could do much better than he. However, as the Session might probably end in a few minutes, he could not help, and he hoped the House would excuse, his adverting to what passed yesterday in another Assembly. It had been there said, that the pension granted to Colonel Barré, of three thousand two hundred pounds per annum, was for his dispensing with the office of Paymaster-general in favour of the honourable Gentleman. [Mr. *Burke*.] This he declared, let who would say it, was an untruth. This place had been assigned him not as a provision, but as one deemed by the late noble Marquis suited to the little abilities he had. He had held it till yesterday, when he had the honour of resigning it into his Majesty's own hands; and who accepted of his resignation in a manner that made the honourable gentleman quit the service with as much good will at least as he had entered on it. The salary of this office used to be only three thousand and sixty pounds per annum, but, on account of the reform which prevented the Paymaster's receiving the large customary fees of office as all his predecessors had done, it was now raised to four thousand pounds per annum. He therefore denied, in terms the most pointed and unequivocal, that the Colonel's pension was in lieu of the Pay-office. He denied, in the same peremptory language, that this appointment was made for his accommodation. He denied that the late Chancellor had gone out from any disinclination to the fatigue or drudgery of office: he knew none better qualified for business, or more ready to undertake whatever might in the smallest degree contribute to the good of his country. He denied that the late Secretary had resigned because the power of the Treasury was deposited in other hands. That these several important facts had been grossly mistated elsewhere, he appealed to his noble and right honourable friends, who he saw were

were just come in, and whom he wished to hear speak for themselves.

Lord John
Cavendish.

Lord *John Cavendish* stated briefly and distinctly how matters stood when he came into office. He said, the merits of the characters in question were eminent, and well deserved the highest honours and rewards their country could bestow. He knew nothing, however, of a bargain, as insinuated in another place, and mentioned just now by his honourable friend : neither, in his opinion, was it possible for any stipulation to exist without his knowledge. The late noble Marquis had always held to him and his other friends a language totally different : and he was one, whose honourable and downright dealing was never impeached with any thing like duplicity or deceit. His great and single object, in every particular of the late arrangement, was not the emolument of certain favourite individuals or his own, but such a political union and stability as might give energy and effect to government. He would only say farther, as there was no time to enlarge, that the reasons elsewhere assigned for his withdrawing himself from the Chancellorship of the Exchequer were not true.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. *Fox* thought himself called upon to employ the moment he now had, before the prorogation, to contradict what had been stated, in all the papers of that day, as making part of a speech delivered by a noble Lord [the Earl of Shelburne] in another House. He readily authenticated, so far as his credit went, the declaration and statement both of his honourable and noble friend. He knew of no composition in the case of Colonel *Barre's* pension ; he certainly knew there was none. The noble person, who gave the one the pension and the other the Pay-office, had oftener than once declared to the honourable Gentleman his reasons for both ; but not a single word, in all their most secret and confidential conversation, ever struck him as bearing the most distant implication of any such meaning. Indeed no gentleman could stoop to fabrications of any sort or for any purpose : but fabrications, thus susceptible of detections, were not more detestable for their infamy than contemptible for their folly. To be sure there was just as much truth in this impudent allegation as in asserting that his noble friend had gone out merely from his dislike to public business, and that the honourable Gentleman himself had deserted the Cabinet because he could not grasp the whole Government in his own hands. These, with two or three other falsehoods equally flagrant, clearly demonstrated to him that the whole

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was a crude farrago of the printer's, invented on purpose to impose on the public. The honourable Gentleman owned he had read them as uttered in a Place, which he always considered as too sacred to veracity and truth to admit of language so foully and pointedly false. He was rather surprised his noble and honourable friend should, by any notice whatever, give a moment's consequence to what was utterly beneath attention. He would do the noble Lord the justice not to suppose him or any gentleman so void of all faith and candour, so abandoned to all delicacy or shame, so perfectly insensible to every feeling of decency and honour, as this impudent and barefaced charge would make him. The honourable Gentleman treated the report, and the paper containing it, as trash, too contemptible to merit a moment's notice or remark. It was, he said, in every respect, a libel on the noble Person, to whom such a base, malignant, and mean-spirited, lie was imputed; and he, for one, would never give credit to an aspersions, which reduced a Nobleman, of the first consequence and distinction, to a level with the meanest and most contemptible wretch in the kingdom!

The Usher of the Black Rod knocked at the door just as Mr. Fox sat down and Mr. Burke was rising. The House then adjourned, with the Speaker at its head, to the House of Lords, and returned in about fifteen minutes: When the Speaker, having read the King's Speech to the House, declared it prorogued to the Third of September next.

T H E E N D.

P. 24, l. 13. *for draught read weight.*

Many of our numerous Readers having signified an earnest Desire of seeing the following short but important Conversation, which took Place in the House of Peers, July 12, a few Minutes previous to the King's Arrival, joined to our full and impartial Account of that singular Business, — to accommodate them, and perfect this most interesting Publication, we insert it, with the most grateful Pleasure, in the present Edition.

Before the peers retired to robe for the royal presence, the Earl of *Derby* rose, and said, he had understood, through the channel of the public prints, and had indeed been also informed through the private communication of friends, that a noble Earl in that House had directly and positively affirmed, — “that he knew no reason *in God's earth*; (the noble Earl's own words,) for the secession of a late right hon. Secretary from his Majesty's councils, than this single one: that his Majesty had been pleased to appoint him to the situation of the first Lord of the Treasury.” He begged leave to inform their Lordships, having authority to do so from the right hon. Gentleman concerned, that this assertion, provided any such assertion had been actually made by the noble Earl, was not founded in fact; but, on the contrary, was nothing more nor less than a direct deviation from the truth. He called upon the noble Earl to stand forward and avow the assertion; and appealed to the other members of his Majesty's cabinet; then present, to lay their hands upon their hearts, and say, Whether or not they did not know of another cause for the secession of the right hon. Secretary, and whether or not that cause did not subsist in a confirmed difference of sentiment between the right hon. Secretary and a noble Earl, now first Lord of the Treasury, respecting points of the most fundamental nature and the utmost political magnitude?

The Earl of *Shelburne* arose, and disavowed the fact of having ever directly affirmed that no other cause existed for the secession of the right hon. Secretary but his own appointment to the first seat of the Treasury-board. He had made no such
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assertion.

assertion. He had certainly said, that, *in his own opinion*, that was the cause, and the exclusive cause; but had not asserted it for fact.

Duke of
Richmond.

The Duke of *Richmond* then got up, and said, he certainly considered it, after what had fallen from the noble Earl who spoke first in the debate, as a justice, due to the right honourable Gentleman alluded to, to declare, that he undoubtedly differed in opinion from some other members of his Majesty's council on subjects of the utmost importance; and that the right honourable Gentleman had openly avowed his intention to resign, on account of that difference, previous to the death of the Marquis of Rockingham.

Lord Vis.
Keppel.

Lord Viscount *Keppel* arose afterwards, and said he also felt himself under the same obligation to do justice to his right honourable relation; and then repeated the fact as stated by the Duke of Richmond, and confirmed the declaration that there certainly was a difference of sentiment between his right honourable relation and the noble Lord at the head of the Treasury, and that "his right honourable relation had openly and positively declared in the cabinet, in consequence of finding himself in a minority on the question which constituted the object of the subsisting difference, that he would resign his situation; and that too at a time when the health of the Marquis of Rockingham was in a flattering condition, so as to make that event, which was thought to give rise to the contest for power, not at all to be apprehended."

Lords Camden and Ashburton were in the House during these declarations, and neither of them rose to contradict them. After the solemn assertion of two individuals, and the implied acquiescence, by silence, of all the rest, we shall hope, from this period, to hear no more of the insidious assertion, which was originally so falsely made, and has since been so diligently diffused, that Mr. Fox retired because Lord Shelburne was appointed First Lord of the Treasury. If no credit were due to the personal declaration of Mr. Fox, the person must be obstinately incredulous indeed, who will withhold his concurrence in the public and solemn testimony of two other members of the Cabinet, neither of whom have thought proper to accompany Mr. Fox in his retirement from office, and whose assertion upon the subject received the silent corroboration of all their colleagues.

Sir

Sir *William Wake* rose immediately after Mr. Solicitor Lee, and seemed not a little hurt by the very little ceremony with which the noble Earl at the head of the Treasury had been treated. He was not by any means disposed to admit implicitly the censure so illiberally thrown out against his noble friend. The honourable and learned Gentleman's declaration, that no one had ventured to utter a syllable in praise of Lord Shelburne, struck him as a challenge which truth and justice equally compelled him to take up. And, so far as his testimony would weigh with the House, he thought the present Minister fully intitled to it in the utmost extent. He had lived for many years with the Nobleman whose name and character had been handled so severely by several honourable Gentlemen. He had the peculiar happiness of sharing his confidence: he was proud to boast of this as one of the most honourable circumstances of his life; and he should but ill discharge the obligations due from such an intimate and respectable harmony of heart and principle as subsisted between them, if he did not come forward when thus explicitly called on, and assert, in the strongest and most peremptory terms, that he never met with a man more open and sincere, more uniform and candid, or more inflexibly honest and upright in all his transactions either of a public or private nature, in the whole course of his life, than his noble and absent friend. In paying this necessary tribute to friendship and merit, he was happy it perfectly coincided with the strictest truth; and, if all the world should conspire to blacken and asperse his Lordship, he would not, in complaisance even to them, belie his own judgement and feelings.

Sir William
Wake.

N. B. The above Speech having been mislaid by accident, the public are desired to read it immediately after that of Mr. Lee.

